

AN
ALARM
TO
PROTESTANTS:
OR, A
Short Method
WITH A
PAPIST.

BEING

An Account of a DISPUTE between Mr.
THOMAS WILLIS, a *Popish Priest*, or *Emissary*,
now residing in LONDON, and Mr. JOHN BAT-
TERSBY, a Young Gentleman of One and Twenty
Years of AGE.

To which is Prefix'd,

A *Prefatory Discourse* by a Gentleman Educated in the
Popish Superstition; Address'd to the *Most Reverend, Right*
Reverend, and *Reverend* the CLERGY of the CHURCH
of ENGLAND, particularly that Part of them who are
Ministers of the Parishes of LONDON, and the Adjacent
Parts, proving the Danger of POPERY, and shewing the
Wiles and Means used by the PRIESTS for Perversion of the
PROTESTANTS, with several Instances of PROTESTANTS
perverted by them; and that it is now their *Indispensible Duty*
to Preach Vigorously against it.

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L O N D O N:

Printed for JOHN PEMBERTON, at the *Buck and Sun*
against St. Dunstan's Church in Fleetstreet, 1714.

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M A L

PROTESTANT

TO

SHORTLY



P A P

Account of a ...
Thomas ...
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To which ...
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W O D O



To his GRACE
THOMAS,
By the Divine Providence,
Lord Archbishop
OF
CANTERBURY,
Primate of all ENGLAND.

May it please your Grace.



THE High Station in the CHURCH, to which the *Divine Providence* has been pleased to advance You, and that Sincere, Constant, and *Christian Zeal* for the *Protestant Apostolical Religion*, so eminent in all your Conduct, through the whole Course of your Life, so worthy of that high Station, seem naturally to direct the following Sheets to Your Grace's Protection: For the following
Sheets

The Epistle Dedicatory.

Sheets are publish'd to open the Eyes of all *Protestants*. to see the present *Danger* of the *CHURCH*, from the restless and unwearied Endeavours of the *known* and *profess'd* Enemies of our *Religion* and *Happiness*; while Night and Day, in the City and in the Country, they are advancing the *Progress* of *POPERY*, by perverting the Flock of *Christ* to their *Superstition* and *Idolatry*; in which they so much succeed for want of those necessary Cautions against their Cunning Designs, that faithful and watchful *Shepherds* ought to give them. In this indeed there has been an amazing and almost stupid Supinity and Neglect, to the Perdition of Hundreds.

TOWARDS the Discovery, and the putting a Stop to this desperate Evil, I have done my Part, in publishing this Book: But to make it effectual, lies in the Breasts of your Grace, and the other of your Brethren the Bishops, and, in some Measure, of every Clergyman in the Three Kingdoms, by an Encouragement of Books of this Nature, and from the Pulpits arming all Congregations against the subtle and Cunning Insinuations of the *Popish* PRIESTS and their *Agents*; on whom, to the Scandal of the *Protestant* Zeal, too many, at this Time, look with a too favourable and amicable Eye.

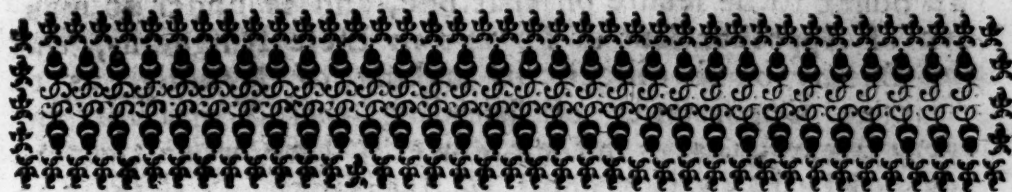
'TIS from the Courage, Wisdom and Piety of such *Christian Prelates* as Your Grace, that the Cause of GOD must hope for a more Manful Defence; which that You may live long to give, are the hearty Wishes and Prayers of,

MY LORD,

Your Grace's most Humble,

And Dutiful Servant,

John Battersby.



A

Prefatory Discourse,

*Written by a Gentleman Educated in
the ROMISH Superstition, &c.*

GENTLEMEN,

‘ **T** H E Young Gentleman, who has been tempt-
 ‘ ed and attack’d by a POPISH-PRIEST and
 ‘ EMISSARY, committing (in his necessary
 ‘ Absence from Town) the publishing the
 ‘ following Controversie between him and
 ‘ the said EMISSARY to me, I thought,
 ‘ that I cou’d not do a more grateful
 ‘ Office to so Pious and Learned a Clergy, than to prefix
 ‘ those Discoveries I have made of the unweary’d En-
 ‘ deavours of the Enemies of our pure, and holy Religion,
 ‘ in their Invasions of those precious Flocks, that are com-
 B mitted

‘mitted to your Charge by God, and the Laws of your Country.

‘THIS seems the more necessary at this Time, because there have appear’d some false Breth’ren amongst us, who to lull us asleep, have endeavour’d to persuade us, that we ought to be secure on that side, and be under no manner of Apprehensions of POPERY in these Kingdoms, tho’ the Enemy be so diligent in making of *Proselytes*, as to omit no Opportunity of spreading their Contagion by every Means, that is in their Power: Nay, when they are not satisfy’d, in Contempt of the Laws, to pervert so many weak Souls, but boldly triumph in their Guilt, and make their Boasts (as you will find by the Introduction to the following Controversie) of inveigling Hundreds every Day into their Superstition; and of foiling several of your learned Body in their Disputes with them, by which, as they pretend, they have gain’d not a few *Converts*.

‘I confess, that it were to be wish’d by all true Lovers of the PROTESTANT CAUSE, that there were not so great, and supine a Security evident in too many of your venerable Body; who are content to alarm the Nation with imaginary Fears on one side, when they are wholly silent on that side, where the Danger is as much more dreadful, as apparent; as will be shown beyond all manner of Doubt, when you have perus’d this small yet necessary Book.

‘To rouse you therefore, from this Lethargy, before it be too late, is the End and Aim of what I have to offer in this *Prefatory Discourse*; that you may from your Pulpit arm those poor Souls (the Loss of which You must answer for to God in the last tremendous Day) with such wholesome Advice, and such solid Arguments, as you must be Masters of, against the Wiles, and artful Designs of so sedulous and cunning an Enemy. I know not by what strange Fate or Infatuation it has happen’d, that we have all along entertain’d far more favourable Opinions of the *Papists*, than either their Doctrines or Practice cou’d ever challenge with Reason from a People, against whom their Malice was never idle, when it was in their Power to exert it. But so it has been, that they have ever had Advocates amongst us to lessen
‘our

' our Fears concerning them; by which means we cou'd
 ' never be perswaded to believe, that we had any real Cause
 ' of Fear from their Conduct, Aims or Inclinations, till we
 ' found them openly assaulting our Church, as in the short
 ' Reign of *James II.* But there was nothing done, no-
 ' thing attempted, nor any Thing design'd in that Reign,
 ' that was not plainly foreseen by the wisest of our Patriots,
 ' and Endeavours made use of to prevent all those Evils
 ' long before they came upon us. 'Tis true, indeed, that
 ' those truly noble and wise Efforts were made to no Pur-
 ' pose; but Gentlemen, the Reason was because most of
 ' the Clergy, all the Court, and too many of the People,
 ' wou'd not be convinc'd, that they ought to entertain any
 ' Fears of POPERY, and a POPISH SUCCESSOR; but
 ' the fatal Event of this their Security, in a little
 ' time shou'd how much they were mistaken, when, with
 ' Terror, they consider'd, that they had scarce any way left
 ' to remove the present Mischiefs, which they felt, and
 ' which yet a rational and necessary Fear had so easily pre-
 ' vented.

' That true *English* Parliament, that brought in the *Bill*
 ' of *Exclusion*, foresaw all that came to pass in the Days of
 ' *James II.* and, therefore, as honestly as wisely, us'd
 ' their Endeavours to preserve the Nation, by a seasonable
 ' Caution from running the Hazard of trusting to the Justice
 ' and Honour of a POPISH SUCCESSOR.

' But because their ADDRESS to King *Charles II.*
 ' on this Occasion is preserv'd by Sir *William Temple*, in the
 ' Appendix to the Third Volume of his Memoirs, and be-
 ' cause it is worded with that Energy and Zeal, that it
 ' may perhaps strike some of you, who are yet insensible of
 ' our present Condition, I shall transcribe it in this Place;
 ' and then proceed to consider how far the Parallel will hold
 ' in Regard of POPERY and the Church at this very
 ' Time.

The Humble ADDRESS of the House of Commons, presented to His Majesty, in Answer to His Majesty's gracious Speech to both Houses of Parliament, upon the 15th Day of December 1680.

May it please your most Excellent Majesty.

WE Your Majesty's most Dutiful and Loyal Subjects, the Commons of this present Parliament assembled, have taken into our serious Consideration, Your Majesty's gracious Speech to Both Houses of Parliament on the Fifteenth of this instant December; and do with all the grateful Sense of Faithful Subjects, and sincere Protestants, acknowledge your Majesty's great Goodness to us, in renewing the Assurances You have been pleas'd to give us, of Your readiness to concur with us in any means for the security of the Protestant Religion, and Your gracious Invitation of us to make our desires known to Your Majesty.

But with Grief of Heart we cannot but observe, that to these Princely Offers, Your Majesty has been advis'd (by what secret Enemies to Your Majesty and Your People we know not) to annex a Reservation, which if insisted on, in the instance alone it is applicable, will render all Your Majesty's other gracious Inclinations of no Effect or Advantage to us. Your Majesty is pleas'd thus to limit Your Promise of Concurrence in these Remedies, which shall be propos'd, that they may consist with preserving the Succession of the Crown in its due and legal course of Descent: And we do humbly inform Your Majesty, that no Interruption of that Descent has been endeavour'd by us, except only the Descent upon the Person of the Duke of York, who, by the wicked Instruments of the Church of Rome, has been manifestly perverted to their Religion. And we do humbly represent to Your Majesty, as the issue of our most deliberate Thoughts and Consultation, that for the Papists to have their Hopes continued, that a Prince of that Religion shall succeed

in the Throne of these Kingdoms, is utterly inconsistent with the Safety of Your Majesty's Person, the preservation of the Protestant Religion, and the Prosperity, Peace and Welfare of Your Protestant Subjects.

That Your Majesty's Sacred Life is in continual Danger, under the prospect of a Popish Successor is evident, not only from the Principles of those devoted to the Church of Rome, which allow that an Heretical Prince (and such they term all Protestant Princes) Excommunicated and Deposed by the Pope, may be destroy'd and murder'd, but also from the Testimonies given in in the Prosecution of the horrid Popish Plot, against divers Traytors attainted for designing to put these accursed Principles into Practice against Your Majesty.

From the expectation of this Succession, has the Number of Papists in Your Majesty's Dominions so much increased within these few Years, and so many been prevail'd with to desert the true Protestant Religion, that they might be prepar'd for the Favours of a Popish Prince, as soon as he should come to the Possession of the Crown. And while the same expectation lasts, many more will be in the same Danger of being thus perverted.

This it is that has harden'd the Papists of this Kingdom, animated and confederated by their Priests and Jesuits to make a Common Purse, provide Arms, make application to Foreign Princes, and solícite their Aid, for imposing Popery upon us, and all this even during Your Majesty's Reign, and while Your Majesty's Government and the Laws were our Protection.

It is Your Majesty's Glory and true Interest to be the Head and Protector of all Protestants, as well Abroad as at Home. But if these Hopes remain, what Alliances can be made for the Advantage of the Protestant Religion and Interest, which shall give Confidence to Your Majesty's Allies, to joyn so vigorously with Your Majesty, as the State of that Interest now requires, while they see this Protestant Kingdom in so much Danger of a Popish Successor, by whom at the present, all their Counsels and Actions may be eluded, as hitherto they have been, and by whom (if he should succeed) they are sure to be destroy'd.

We have thus humbly Laid before Your Majesty, some of those great Dangers and Mischiefs which evidently accompany the expectation of a Popish Successor, the certain and unspeakable Evils which will come upon Your Majesty's Protestant Subjects and their Posterity,

if

if such a Prince should inherit, are more also than we can well enumerate.

Our Religion, which is now so dangerously shaken, will then be totally overthrown, nothing will be left, or can be found to Protect or Defend it.

The Execution of Old Laws must cease, and it will be in vain to expect new Ones. The most Sacred Obligations of Contracts and Promises, if any should be given, that shall be judged to be against the Interest of a Romish Religion, will be violated, as is undeniable, not only from Argument and Experience elsewhere, but from the sad Experience this Nation once had on the like Occasion.

In the Reign of such a Prince, the Pope will be acknowledged Supream, (though the Subjects of this Kingdom have Sworn the contrary) and all Causes, either as Spiritual, or in order to Spiritual Things, will be brought under his Jurisdiction. The Lives, Liberties and Estates of all such Protestants, as value their Souls and Religion more than Secular Concernments, will be adjudged Forfeited.

To all this we might add, That it appears in the discovery of the Plot, that Foreign Princes were invited to assist in securing the Crown to the Duke of York, with Arguments from his great Zeal to Establish Popery, and to extirpate Protestants (whom they call Hereticks) out of his Dominions, and such will expect performance accordingly.

We further humbly beseech Your Majesty, in Your great Wisdom, to consider, whether in Case the Imperial Crown of this Protestant Kingdom should descend to the Duke of York, the Opposition which may possibly be made to his Possessing it, may not only endanger the further Descent in the Royal Line, but even Monarchy it self.

For these Reasons, we are most humble Petitioners to Your most Sacred Majesty, That in tender commiseration of Your Poor Protestant People, Your Majesty will be graciously pleased to depart from the Reservation in Your said Speech, and when a Bill shall be tender'd to Your Majesty in a Parliamentary way, to disable the Duke of York from inheriting the Crown, Your Majesty will give Your Royal Assent thereto. And as necessary to fortify and defend the same, that Your Majesty will likewise be graciously pleased to Assent to an Act, whereby Your Majesty's Protestant Subjects may be enabled to Associate themselves for the defence of Your Majesty's

Majesty's Person, the Protestant Religion, and the Security of Your Kingdoms.

These Requests we are constrain'd humbly to make to Your Majesty, as of absolute Necessity for the Safe and Peaceable enjoyment of our Religion.

Without these Things the Alliances of England will not be valuable, nor the People encourag'd to contribute to Your Majesty's Service.

As some further means for the Preservation of both our Religion and Property, we are humble Suiters to Your Majesty, that from henceforth such Persons only may be Judges within the Kingdom of England and Dominion of Wales, as are Men of Ability, Integrity, and known Affection to the Protestant Religion. And that they may hold both their Offices and Sallaries quam diu si bene gesserint. That several Deputy Lieutenants, and Justices of the Peace, fitly qualify'd for those Employments, having been of late displaced, and others put in their Room, who are Men of Arbitrary Principles and Countenancers of Papists and Popery, such only may bear the Office of Lord-Lieutenant, as are Persons of Integrity, and known Affection to the Protestant Religion. That Deputy Lieutenants, and Justices of the Peace may be also qualify'd, and may be moreover Men of Ability, of Estates, and Interest in their Country.

That none may be employ'd as Military Officers, or Officers in Your Majesty's Fleet, but Men of known Experience, Courage, and Affection to the Protestant Religion.

These Our humble Requests being obtained, we shall on our part be ready to assist Your Majesty for the Preservation of Tangier, and for putting Your Majesty in such a Condition, as may preserve Your Majesty's Sovereignty of the Seas, and be for the Defence of the Nation.

If Your Majesty hath made, or shall make any necessary Alliances for the Defence of the Protestant Religion and Interest, and security of this Kingdom, this House will be ready to assist and stand by Your Majesty in support of the same.

After this our humble Answer to Your Majesty's gracious Speech, we hope no evil Instruments whatsoever shall be able to lessen Your Majesty's esteem of that Fidelity and Affection we bear to Your Majesty's Service, but that Your Majesty will always retain in Your Royal Breast that favourable Opinion of us, Your Loyal Commons, that those other good Bills, which we have now under Consideration,

con-

conducting to the great Ends we have before mention'd; as also all Laws for the benefit and comfort of Your People, which shall from Time to Time be tender'd for Your Majesty's Royal Assent, shall find acceptance with Your Majesty.

' It is more, than amazing, that so just, so lively, and so terrible a Description of a POPISH SUCCESSOR, as is given in this Honest and Wise Address, shou'd not have awaken'd the stupidity of those Times. What Reason the House of Commons had for what they said was made sufficiently evident in the Reign of King James II, when the Laws were dispens'd with to smoothe the Way for POPERY; when the Colleges were seiz'd, and Popish Teachers fix'd in that of Maudlin, who taught in the very University of Oxford not only their Philosophy but Divinity; when the Protestant Bishops were imprison'd for Petitioning, and the Popish Bishops went about at Liberty in their own proper Habits, and the Jesuits set up Schools to corrupt our very Children in one of the Royal Courts; when the Church of England was revil'd with her magnify'd Doctrines of Passive-Obedience and Non-Resistance, and bid exercise those Maxims in their Practice, which they had contended for with such Warmth in the Theory, particularly in a Book, call'd, *A new Test of the Church of England's Loyalty*, written by one Monson, a Popish Priest.

THESE were the Evils foreseen by this wise Parliament, and various more and greater, if the happy Revolution had not put a stop to their furious Carere; all which had been prevented by the *Bill of Exclusion*, if the Nation, and the King would have thought as wisely as they did, and had been but apprehensive enough of POPERY.

' BUT it may be here objected, that tho' their Fears were Just, as was evident from the Event, yet we have by no Means any Reason to think that our present Case is the same or to believe, that there is at this Time any real Ground to entertain such Apprehensions of POPERY.

' To this I must Answer that tho' we have many good Laws against all the Encroachments of that Superstition, and its Agents, yet when the Execution of those Laws is wholly neglected, and they are broken every Day without

‘ out the least Notice or Prosecution, it is the same Thing,
 ‘ as if there were no such Laws at all; for it is Execution
 ‘ that gives Life to any Law, and makes it of any Force
 ‘ or Validity.

‘ NEXT I must Answer, that there never can be more
 ‘ reasonable Grounds for the rousing our selves to a Man-
 ‘ ful and Christian Defence, than when our Holy Religion is
 ‘ not only secretly undermin’d, but openly assaulted, as will
 ‘ be plain, not only from the Instances I shall give in this
 ‘ present Discourse, but by the Dispute it self, before
 ‘ which I offer these Considerations to your Zeal.

‘ THAN when a PPOISH PRETENDER to this Crown is not
 ‘ only defended in this Nation, but protected by a Court
 ‘ so near to these Kingdoms notwithstanding all the Instances
 ‘ that her Sacred Majesty has made by her Minitters for
 ‘ his Removal, tho’ the Prince who thus audaciously su-
 ‘ stains him, is feudatory to *France*, and has so entire a De-
 ‘ pendance on the *French King* our Allie.

‘ THAN when we have had the *Memoirs* of the *Chevalier*
 ‘ *de St. George* not only printed here with Impunity, but
 ‘ even in *Ireland*, and there most industriously spread about,
 ‘ and the Agent in that Traiterous Transaction represented
 ‘ as a just Object of her Majesty’s Mercy, in order to ob-
 ‘ tain a *Noli-Prosequi*, as is evident from the Proceedings of
 ‘ the Honourable the House of Commons of *Ireland*, publish’d
 ‘ in all, or most of our Prints.

‘ THAN when we have farther had a *Jus Sacrum* set forth
 ‘ here for the PRETENDER’s Right; and to prove that no
 ‘ Prince can lose his Right to govern these Nations, by
 ‘ his being a *Papist*, expressly contrary to our known Acts
 ‘ of Parliament, that declare a *Papist* incapable of Succeed-
 ‘ ing, or Reigning in these Kingdoms.

‘ WHEN the *Post-Boy* shall tell us, *December 8th*, that
 ‘ there is a Pardon pass’d the Seals for one Author who
 ‘ has written expressly against the *Protestant* Succession in
 ‘ the Illustrious House of *Hanover*, and other Authors guilty
 ‘ of the same Treason go about unmolested.

‘ THAN when a Volume in Folio is publish’d in the
 ‘ *Gazette*, and sold publickly in the Booksellers-Shops to
 ‘ prove the Title of the PRETENDER, and plainly to inva-
 ‘ lidate that of her Majesty.

‘ THAN

‘ THAN when to reduce all these Designs to Action, Men have been actually list’d in *Ireland* for the *French King*, with an Assurance, that they shou’d see the *Young King*, as is evident from the Affidavit of *MURPHY*.

‘ THAN when the *Examiner* notwithstanding all this shall not only ridicule our Fears, and Apprehensions of *POPERY*, but represent them as Causeless, nay Seditious, and directly against the Ministry tho’ I confess, that I cannot imagine, that any greater Affront, and Indignity can be offer’d the Ministry, than to insinuate, nay plainly to declare, as he does, that to write against *POPERY*, is to write against them. God forbid that the *Protestant Religion*, and Succession, and our Laws, Liberties, and Lives shou’d be in so deplorable a Condition as the *Examiner* wou’d make them.

‘ BUT it is no wonder, that the *Present Ministry* should feel some Effects of his Malice, who has been so impudent in reviling, and traducing some of the brightest Characters of the *Last*, for it is enough to raise his Clamorous Indignation, to be, or have been made Choice of by the Queen, as the most eminent Objects of her Favour.

‘ THO’ the Characters of the *Present Ministry* are too Conspicuous, and too well known (as Zealous for the *Protestant Succession*, and Religion, and the Laws, and Liberties of their Country) to be capable of being misrepresented by him to Men of Judgment, and Sense, yet the *Examiner* being so caress’d by the *POPISH* and *JACOBITE* Party, and daily read, and extol’d by the Gentlemen of that *Kidney*, it may too much encourage the Champions of *Rome*, by making them fancy themselves such Favourites of the Ministry, as to give new Life to their Attempts, and so by Consequence justly heighten our Fears, and Apprehensions of *POPERY*?

‘ CAN there be any Time when *POPERY* is more to be fear’d, than when the very Bulwarks, and great Champions of the Church of *England* are publickly abus’d in Print, for Writing against, and exposing those *Superstitions* of the *PAPISTS*, which are at this Day publickly practis’d in these Kingdoms? For this has been the Fate of the Right Reverend the Bishop of *St. Asaph* on his writing the Life of *St. Winifred*, to whose *Well* the *PAPISTS* resort in the open Face of Day, and perform their Pilgrimages and
De-

' Devotions, without any manner of Disguise. Let any
 ' Man consult the *Examiners* upon this subject, and then
 ' fairly decide, whether there be not a just and rational
 ' Ground to be apprehensive of *POPERY*, when it has ob-
 ' tain'd so Publick and well known an Advocate as the
 ' *Examiner*?

' NOR has the Right Reverend the Bishop of *Salisbury*
 ' escap'd with fewer Insults from the Party, notwithstand-
 ' ing the many exemplary Charities he has perform'd, and
 ' that indefatigable Application to the Discharge of the Duty
 ' of a conscientious Prelate, acknowledg'd by his very Enemies
 ' themselves, because he, like a prudent and good Prelate,
 ' declar'd against admitting such Ignorant Fellows into holy
 ' Orders, whose Want of Abilities might betray the *Pro-*
 ' *testant* Cause, instead of defending it against the Attacks
 ' of so busy, and cunning an Enemy, as is daily employ'd
 ' to deceive and mislead their Parishioners. Nor has this
 ' Learned Bishop been exempt from the Malice of the *Exa-*
 ' *miner* (a constant Enemy to the Enemies of *POPERY*, and
 ' as constant a Friend to its Friends) on Account of his
 ' Preface to the Third Volume of the History of the Re-
 ' formation, particular in *Examiner*, November 23. In which
 ' *Examiner* there is likewise an Advertisement of a Book
 ' written against him by *Miso-Sarum*, which in plain *Eng-*
 ' *lish* is by a Hater of the Bishop of *Sarum*. 'Tis true, that
 ' there is so little Modesty and Christianity in the Title,
 ' and so little Sense in the Book, that the Impotence of
 ' the Scribler is only discover'd by his Essay. But how can
 ' we expect Honour, Candour, or Reason from the avow'd
 ' Product of Hatred?

' BUT who are the Haters of this venerable Father of our
 ' Church, this Champion against *POPERY*, but *Papists* and *Ja-*
 ' *cobites*? Who can never forgive the laudable share he had
 ' in putting a stop to the violent Progress of *POPERY* and
 ' ARBITRARY POWER, which once before, more barely and openly
 ' than at present, made their Attacks on the *Protestant Re-*
 ' *ligion*, and the Laws and Liberties of our Country; when
 ' *Passive-Obedience* and *Non-Resistance* (to make way for them)
 ' were strain'd so far, as to require a silent Surrender of
 ' our *Religion* and *Laws* to the Prince. For Doctrines of this
 ' Tonnor can tend to no other End, or conclude in any

‘ Thing less dangerous and destructive: And may very
 ‘ justly, therefore, raise our Fears of POPERY and SLAVERY.

‘ CAN there be any Time when we ought to be more sus-
 ‘ picious of the Designs of the *Papists*, than when their Ad-
 ‘ vocate the *Examiner* on the 29th of *January* last, shall dis-
 ‘ cover so plain a Design of lulling us asleep from the most
 ‘ apparent Danger of POPERY, by telling us that the REVO-
 ‘ LUTION it self was the Effect of meer Jealousies and
 ‘ Fears notwithstanding all those undisguis’d Steps taken by
 ‘ King *James*, for the Establisshing the Church of *Rome* in
 ‘ these Nations; and the extirpating the Church of *Eng-*
 ‘ *land*?

‘ CAN there be any Time, when we ought to be more
 ‘ apprehensive of POPERY, than when its Agents are so in-
 ‘ dustrious in their Endeavours to reconcile too many to a
 ‘ POPISH PRETENDER, by insinuating, that he is now (by
 ‘ Miracle) become a Protestant?

‘ BUT, Gentlemen, you have too much good Sense, are
 ‘ Masters of too much Understanding to be betray’d to
 ‘ Remissness by so very fond a Credulity; you may have
 ‘ heard, and sure not a Few of you do know, that the
 ‘ POPE can allow of dissembling of Religion to attain his
 ‘ Ends. King *James II.* was an undeniable Proof of this
 ‘ Truth. For he not only pretended to be a Protestant till
 ‘ after his Accession to the Throne, but prosecuted an
 ‘ eminent Citizen of *London*, who had an Exorbitant Fine
 ‘ laid upon him, only for saying that he was a *PAPIST*. Can
 ‘ you believe, that his pretended Son is less instructed in the
 ‘ Wiles and Arts of the *Papish Religion*, than King *James*?
 ‘ Or can you with the least shadow of Reason give the least
 ‘ Credit to so sudden, and unaccountable a Change in the
 ‘ PRETENDER, without any means of Information, or any
 ‘ previous Doubts of that Faith, in which he had been bred
 ‘ from his Infancy, and instructed with all the Care and
 ‘ Application of those, whose Interest it was to keep him
 ‘ firm to that Religion, in which he was confirm’d by the
 ‘ last dying Words of his suppos’d Father? And those Solemn
 ‘ Adjurations of the Dying, which use to strike into the
 ‘ Minds of most Men, especially more with those of the Young,
 ‘ not yet weaken’d in their Biggotry, by any Political Consi-
 ‘ derations, are not so easily thrown off. Can you therefore,

‘ after

' after all this, believe him in an Instant a sincere Prote-
 ' stant? This wou'd be a degree of Stupidity beyond all
 ' that ever merited the Name of Credulity in its wildest
 ' Sense. No, Gentlemen, as it is evident, that he puts on
 ' that Mask only to deceive those, who shall be so mon-
 ' strously weak, as to put any Confidence in it, so you
 ' ought with the greater Vigour, with the greater Watch-
 ' fulness, with the greater Zeal to expose the Impieties of
 ' that Religion, that by such sinister Means and Arts is en-
 ' deavouring to undermine the Christian Church of *England*;
 ' and to make you, her very Teachers, the abandon'd In-
 ' struments of its hellish Design. For shou'd he for our
 ' Sins (which God of his infinite Mercy avert) ever attain
 ' the Possession of these Nations, he wou'd then throw off
 ' the Vizard, and with a Foreign Army of *PAPISTS*, not with
 ' a Protestant Army of *Englishmen*, like *James II.* declare him-
 ' self a *PAPIST*; nor wou'd he forget your ancient Zeal and
 ' Writings against *POPERY*, nor your modern and unanimous
 ' Declaration to her present Majesty, of making a stand a-
 ' gainst it again, when ever it shou'd appear. But he wou'd
 ' soon put it out of your Power to make a stand against,
 ' or resist his open Endeavours, being now destitute of all
 ' Foreign Help to relieve you from such tremendous Evils,
 ' as are foretold in the Address, and which nothing but
 ' your own Credulity had brought upon you.

' It is true, that while such able, and such honest Heads
 ' are at the Helm, our Danger is the less; but alas! they
 ' are but Men, we are not sure of their Lives even for one
 ' Moment! they are Men, and therefore must die, and
 ' Heav'n can only tell how soon! But whether those, who
 ' may succeed them may have the same, or equal Abilities,
 ' Honour, Religion, or Honesty, who can assure us? It
 ' is possible, that Men may come into their Places who may
 ' not regard the Good of the Publick, but be wholly intent
 ' on their own private and immediate Gain; who may be-
 ' come Pensioners to the Mighty about us; or may sacrifice
 ' all to their Hatred and Revenge. History has given us
 ' Examples of Men in great Power, that out of some pe-
 ' culiar View have surrender'd their Country, their Religi-
 ' on and Laws to Infidel Invaders. To instance only in
 ' Count *Julian*, who call'd the *Moors* into *Spain*, and subju-
 ' gated

gated all that Country for several Hundred Years to *Mahometism*, only to revenge the Affront put upon him by the King's debauching his Daughter.

POWER is often attain'd by Cunning, or by odd Circumstances of Things, by Men of little Capacities or less Moderation; and who have not the Command of their Passions, but to gratifie them wou'd stick at no means, tho' never so detrimental to the Publick. Our Happiness therefore in the present Ministry being of so frail, and uncertain a Nature, Can there be any Time more proper to arm Mens Minds against the desperate Assaults of *POPERY*, than this, when it threatens us from so many Quarters?

CAN you be supine, and secure against all Fears of *POPERY*, when the *Popish Priests*, and *Emissaries* go publickly about to make Proselytes to their Impiety, tho' it be known to be High Treason by the Laws of this Land? When there are so many *Popish Chappels* openly frequented every Day by Thousands of that Religion? When in *Lancashire* they have their *Mass-Houses* almost as barefac'd as in the Time of *James II.* when the *Popish Seminaries* abroad send Yearly fresh Missionaries into *England* to encrease their Harvest?

WHEN all these Things are as evident as the Sun at Noon in a clear Day, certainly it can be no Crime against Reason, Religion, and the State, to apprehend the Designs of the Priests and Progress of *POPERY*.

BUT to clear this Point from the modern Imputation of meer Clamour, I shall proceed to a short Consideration of the following Sheets, which gave Occasion for this Prefatory Discourse, and which being Fact, will, I hope, be motive sufficient to make you as watchful for the Preservation of the Souls of your several Flocks from the Infection of *POPERY*, as those *Priests* and *Emissaries* continually show themselves in promoting the Contagion. So that your Parishoners may from your Pulpits be strengthen'd in their Faith, and arm'd against the Wiles of these devouring Foxes, who compass Sea and Land to make one Proselyte, and when he is made, they make him twofold more a Child of Hell than themselves. Mat. 23. 15. And such

such are most of the Converts they make, as will be plain from what follows.

GENTLEMEN, this is no *Party Cause*, there is nothing of *Whig* and *Tory* in this Dispute; it is only PROTESTANT and PAPIST; it is only a Warning to put you in Mind what your Enemies are doing, and to rouse your Religion, and necessary Zeal to act like true Sons of the Church of *England*, who have been so eminent a Bulwark against POPERY, that when that falls, or loses its old Christian Zeal, it is to be fear'd, that the *Protestant Cause* will be lost. This Church (Gentlemen pray seriously observe me) is now in your Hands, if you guard it like Christians, as your venerable Predecessors have done, you may transmit it to your Children, if you do not, the God of Truth will require their Perdition at your Hands; and you must answer for it at the most terrible Judgment Seat of *Jesus Christ*, where no vain Plea of Parties, or Sublunary Aims will be regarded, unless it be to aggravate your Condemnation.

THERE are in *Europe* the following Seminaries or Colleges for the Educating the *English* Youth in POPERY, and for the fitting out Priests or Missionaries for these Nations.

To begin with *Rome*, Here is an *English* College of *Seculars*, tho' under the Direction of the *Jesuits*, and here are scarce any bred but such, as are design'd for *Priests*, and make, by the politick management of the Fathers of the Society, the most stupid of the Mission.

AT *Paris* there is a Monastery of *English Benedictine Monks*, which affords some Labourers in the Mission, or is never without some of its Body in that Office here in *Britain*.

THERE is a College of *English Seculars* in *Lisbon*, where Gentlemen, but mostly *Priests*, have their Education and Instructions.

AT *St. Omers* there is a College of *English Jesuits*, the most numerous of any of our Nation abroad, and those who enter into their Fraternity go to Study Philosophy, and Divinity at *Liege*, where they have another College peculiarly restrain'd to the Members of their Order.

BESIDES

* BESIDES all these *Doway* has the most *Colleges*, or *Seminaries* of *English* of any other Place; for here is first a College under the Direction of the *Secular Priests*, which in my Time, contain'd about *Fourscore* Students, besides Professors and Superiors. Here is likewise a College of *English Monks*, which then consisted of about *Forty* Students, besides the Monks. In this same University there are more, a *Scots* College of *Jesuits*, and an *Irish* College, and a Fryary of *English Franciscans*.

* BESIDES these Ten Colleges, I have heard of a Monastery of *Monks* at *Lamspring*, in *Germany*, and there may be more of which I have never yet had any Account. Tho' it seems to me, that if there were no more, than these Ten *Seminaries*, to fill these Nations with *Popish Teachers*, they ought to be sufficient to give us a just ground of Alarm, and to make us so far awake from our Lethargy, as to enquire what all this Multitude of *Missionaries* are sent hither to do, and what they are doing.

* We must here likewise consider, that these are Hives, that harbour no Drones at this Time of Day; there is scarce one permitted to enjoy a Recluse and Monastick Life: No, they must all take their Turn into the Harvest, and use their utmost Endeavours not only to preserve the Flocks, which they find at their coming, but to encrease them all Ways, that are practicable, and with all their Industry and Application.

* To promote this great Business of perverting these Nations to *POPERY*, there are such Maxims insus'd into every Part of the Body, into Women as well as Men, Layety as well as Clergy, that this Zeal of making *Proselites* spreads to every Member of the *Romish Communion*. For they are all taught to believe, that all, who die in the *Protestant* Religion are certainly damn'd. Add to this, that they are at the same time taught to believe, that to get over a Soul to their Church, is not only the highest Act of Charity, but as highly Meritorious.

* BUT besides these general Endeavours to promote the *Common Cause*, the *Jesuits* (a formidable Body here as well as in other Parts of *Europe*, having no less, than 70000 *l.* a Year

‘ a Year in this Kingdom) have a Party of *Ladies Missionary*, who are call’d *Fille Devotes*, and who are immediately under the Direction of the Fathers of the SOCIETY, and are, as it were, peculiarly devoted to the promoting their Interest, not only among the *Romanists*, but among the *Protestants* likewise, by inveigling poor ignorant Women, with whom, in all Disguises, they come acquainted: And if they can by any Acts or Contrivance insinuate any Doubts into those, with whom they converse, the good Fathers are ready to give the finishing Stroke to the Work.

‘ It wou’d be tedious to give a particular History of every Convert, whom they have made in a few Years, and it wou’d be attended with many Difficulties, which cou’d not be vanquish’d without alarming the Party, who are all oblig’d to conceal Particulars, which may be of such dangerous Consequence to their Lives, if they shou’d meet with Prosecutors. I shall therefore content my self with a very short Account of a Few, that came lately and accidentally to my Knowledge.

‘ One *Elizabeth Edmondson*, a young Woman, of poor but honest Parents, and she as zealous and constant Church-Woman ’till about a Quarter of a Year ago, she heard a certain Minister of a Parish not far from *London* (whose Name in regard to his Character and Reputation I do not mention) tell his Congregation, in the Pulpit, *That it were to be wish’d, that the Discipline of the Church of England wou’d admit of Confession*; This absurd (if not impious Expression) struck the young Girl with Doubts of her Faith, especially in that, and other Particulars arising from that; and these Doubts were soon made use of to her Perversion by one *Mrs. Clark* (an old Woman, and doubtless a Female POPISH EMISSARY) living in *Wild-street*, who in less than a Quarter of a Year, by the Assurance of some of the Fathers, has brought her to that absolute Dependance on the Word of the Priest, that she declar’d before more than my self, *That if the Priest shou’d tell her, that the Oaken Table was made of Gold, or that a black Crow was white she wou’d believe him, For why (said she) shou’d a Priest tell me a Lye?* Of such, as these are their Converts made.

‘ I endeavour’d to touch her with some Remorse for
 ‘ so sudden a Change from the Religion she was bred in,
 ‘ without imparting her Scruples, or Doubts, to any one
 ‘ that could resolve them, but to one, who was a profess’d
 ‘ Enemy to our Religion. I proffer’d to write down my
 ‘ Reasons against the *Popish Superstition*, that she might show
 ‘ them to her PRIEST, but she assur’d me she cou’d remem-
 ‘ ber them, and wou’d consult the PRIEST about them; but
 ‘ I have not since heard any thing of or from her.

‘ I mention this Account (of which I have sufficient
 ‘ Vouchers) the rather, because, if these Papers shou’d
 ‘ chance to fall into the Hands of that Divine, who was so
 ‘ imprudently fond of this Discipline of *POPERY*, he may
 ‘ see the great Scandal he has given, by an Expression (to
 ‘ speak the softest of it) so very indiscreet, and repent of
 ‘ the Evil, he has done, in losing one Soul from the Flock
 ‘ of Christ. And indeed it seems something unaccountable,
 ‘ that this very Divine shou’d be angry with the Dissenters
 ‘ for not entirely acquiescing in every Particular of the
 ‘ Discipline of the Church, when he himself shall thus pub-
 ‘ lickly from the Pulpit arraign the same Discipline as de-
 ‘ fective, in not admitting one of the greatest Abuses of
 ‘ the *ROMISH Superstition*.

‘ THIS ought to be a Warning to our young hot Divines, to
 ‘ weigh thoroughly what they deliver from the Pulpit, when
 ‘ such Evil Consequences may follow, and when the Enemy
 ‘ is so vigilant, and ready every where to take Advantage
 ‘ of their Mistakes, and to improve them in this manner to
 ‘ their sinister Ends.

‘ IN the Introduction to the following Dispute you will
 ‘ find, that the PRIEST, or *ROMISH EMISSARY*, Mr. *Thomas Willis*
 ‘ made his Boasts to Mr. *Battersby*, that he had gain’d two
 ‘ young Ladies by confuting the above-mention’d Divine,
 ‘ both in an Oral and Written Dispute: Nay, he was tran-
 ‘ sported to say farther, that he thought himself able to
 ‘ convert all Mankind, that wou’d but enter into a Dis-
 ‘ pute with him. A Confidence arising, no doubt, from his
 ‘ frequent Success with the Ignorant. But the following
 ‘ Sheets will, I believe, convince the World, that this mighty
 ‘ *Goliath* has met with a young *David*, who has shewn how
 ‘ very weakly grounded his Vanity was.

‘ It is remarkable that Mr. Willis, in his Letter to Mr. Battersby, of the 5th of January, has these Words,— If Truth be the Thing contended for, I cannot see why the Method I proposed shou’d be rejected—— for the EXPERIENCE I have had assures me, that it is the nearest way to it.

‘ The Experience, he speaks of shows, that he has been an industrious Man in his Way, for that implies a frequent Repetition of the same Method, which he had found so successful. His Friends indeed bragg, that he has converted his *Hundreds*; and if one of their Agents has made such a Progress, what may we fear from so many Thousands; with which this Town and Nation do swarm? Is it not Time to instruct your Congregations well, when their Ignorance makes them so easy a Prey to their Adversaries, who, in Reality, have so little to say for their Cause, as is plain from what this Champion of theirs has urg’d in the following Letters?

‘ I shall not here intermeddle with the Dispute, for I think the young Gentleman has confuted him beyond a reasonable Reply; and sufficiently prov’d, that the Method he has taken was perfectly just, and the Question he has propos’d essentially the first, that can come under their Consideration. For it is beyond all manner of Controversie, naturally the *first*, because the very Proof of the Being of a God depends on the Certainty of the Senses, judging of their Proper Objects; for from them we derive the the primitive Notices of Things, and if they can deceive us in their proper Objects in their true Position, then we are not certain of any Thing at all, and by Consequence must doubt of the the very Being of God Himself; and then what signifies it to talk of the Church, the *Infallible Church* when there can be no Proof of any Church, or any Religion at all. To such a State of Infidelity does the Essential Doctrine of the *Church of Rome* of Necessity reduce us.

‘ BUT to return from this Digression.— There is one Mr. Watson, the Son of a Country Minister, whose Father leaving several Children behind him, a Charitable good Lady of *Yorkshire* took him into her Care, and sent him up to *London*, and fix’d him in a House, where he was

‘ provided with all Things necessary and decent, in order
 ‘ to improve his Education at the Pious Lady’s Expence.

‘ He had not been long in this Town, when he fell into
 ‘ some *Popish Acquaintance* (for in every Place, and Con-
 ‘ versation almost, you will find some of them mingling)
 ‘ who taking Advantage of his Youth (as being but Eighteen
 ‘ Years old) and his Ignorance, insinuated Fears into him,
 ‘ that he shou’d be damn’d if he did not turn *Roman Catholick*.
 ‘ When ever any Friend enquires of him who perverted him
 ‘ he stops the enquiry by telling him, that he has been con-
 ‘ vinc’d only by reading.

‘ But we must consider, that it is one of the *Popish Arts*,
 ‘ to lend such Books to young People, that with Plausibility
 ‘ enough, may raise Scruples and Doubts in those, who
 ‘ know little, which when the *Priests* are ready to render
 ‘ of Use to their Perversion, while they insinuate thus far
 ‘ into their good Graces, as to gain them to a perfect Con-
 ‘ fidence in them, so to cut off all Retreat, which by con-
 ‘ sulting any *Protestant Divine* in such Difficulties, they
 ‘ wou’d certainly find.

‘ THIS Frenzy has so effectually work’d it self into this
 ‘ unfortunate Youth, that for fear of being damn’d in the
 ‘ Church of *England*, he has thrown off all the Tyes of Gra-
 ‘ titude to his Patroness, and refuses to comply with her
 ‘ Commands of returning into the Country. But he chuses
 ‘ rather here to run the Risque of disobliging any Body than
 ‘ the *Priest*.

‘ WHAT need I give more Instances (tho’ I can) of a
 ‘ Thing so notorious, and which they are not sollicitous of
 ‘ concealing, since they make it their Boasts, that their
 ‘ Church daily encreases in these Kingdoms, by the Acces-
 ‘ sion of Hundreds, and when they bear them in Triumph
 ‘ publickly to the *Mafs-Houses*. And yet the *Examiner* has
 ‘ the Front to endeavour to persuade us, that our Appre-
 ‘ hensions of *POPERY* are Vain and Seditious.

‘ I will not mention Mr. *Battersby*, whose Youth promis’d
 ‘ them their usual Success, since his good Sense and Religion
 ‘ have preserv’d him from their Corruption; and because
 ‘ you will find the whole Account of that Matter from his
 ‘ own Hand, in the Introduction.

‘ AFTER

‘ AFTER what has been said, and the *Fact* so evidently prov’d, is it not a miserable Thing to hear too many of our Pulpits resounding with Party and Political Disputes among our selves, while *POPERY* smiles at our Folly, and goes on quietly and triumphantly, and little or no Notice taken of it, by those to whose Care our Religion is committed; and that at a Time, when it is thus openly and daily assaulted in the View of our Teachers, and in the Face of the Law.

‘ BE not therefore terrify’d from preaching against *POPERY*, by any Fear of disobliging the *MINISTRY*; or imagin, that you shall render your selves obnoxious to them, and so prove injurious to your Preferment, or Loyalty, (as some are pleas’d to miscale it) do not believe the *Examiner*, he falsely and scandalously abuses the *Ministry*; for ’tis a *PROTESTANT*, not a *POPISH Ministry*; a *Ministry* for the *Protestant SUCCESSION* in the the House of *HANOVER*, not in the *New Protestant PRETENDER*. You cannot therefore oblige the *Ministry* more, than by preaching against *POPERY*, by that means to open the Eyes of the People to see the Danger of the Church from a *Popish*, or what’s all one, a false *Protestant Successor*.

‘ BUT if it really were so, as the *Examiner* says it is, and that the present *Ministry* wou’d be angry indeed at you for preaching against *POPERY*, which sure no Man but the *Examiner* will dare to think, much less affirm, then your Duty calls the more earnestly on you to make that stand against *POPERY*, which you assur’d the World in your Address you wou’d whenever again it shou’d appear. For when can it appear more terrible, and fuller of imminent Danger, than when so far under the Protection of the Administration, as to make those Criminal, who shall speak, write, or preach against it? As the *Examiner* asserts that it now is? Cry therefore aloud and spare not; it is your surest Way to Preferment here, and to Salvation hereafter.

‘ You can give no greater Testimony of your Loyalty to your Queen, whose Life is in more imminent Danger from their Principles and Practice, than that of King *Charles’s* was, tho’ so much apprehended by so wise a House of Commons, as drew up the former Address, and whose
‘ Fore-

' Foresight was confirm'd in every Particular in the Reign
 ' of that *Popish Successor*, whom they fear'd. This is the only
 ' Crisis of their Cause; their Eyes are on the *PRETENDER* so
 ' near them, and the *Protestant Successor's* so far off, that Her
 ' Sacred Majesty seems almost the only Bar to their Hopes
 ' and Desires. If therefore you wou'd prove your selves
 ' Loyal, cry aloud, and spare not, you can come to no Damage;
 ' you must find all Encouragement; for we have a *Protestant*
 ' Church of England Queen, we have a *Protestant Church* of
 ' England Ministry, we have a *Protestant Church* of England
 ' House of Lords, and Commons, who all, by an infallible
 ' Consequence must be extreemly pleas'd, and satisfy'd with
 ' your Zeal against *POPERY*: Your *Diocesans* are *Protestant*
 ' Church of England Prelates — and must applaud your Zeal
 ' against your old Enemy *POPERY*, God is the Supream Head
 ' of your Church, who has declar'd himself a Hater of *Idolatry*,
 ' and must therefore be pleas'd with your Zeal against the
 ' *Idolatrous Church* of Rome.

' So that by preaching against *POPERY*, you render your
 ' selves agreeable both to God and your Country, and dis-
 ' oblige none but *Jacobites*, and *Papists*, the *POPE* and the
 ' *DEVIL*; with whom you have always had, and ought to
 ' have, a glorious, perpetual, and *Christian Warfare*.

' IN this you will imitate the Apostles, and Martyrs, and
 ' the Fathers of the purer Times of *Christianity*; who were
 ' all zealous against *Idolatry* less direct than that now pra-
 ' ctis'd in the Church of Rome, and keep up that venerable
 ' Character, your pious and learned Predecessors have ob-
 ' tain'd in all the *Protestant World*. Cry therefore a loud against
 ' *Popery* and spare not, your Duty, Your Religion demand it,
 ' God and Man require it at your Hands.

The End of the Prefatory Discourse.



A

Short Method

WITH A

PAPIST:

OR, AN

Alarm to *Protestants*, &c.

I SHALL not detain the Reader with any needless Circumstances, but shall only just give the Rise, or Occasion of the following Discourse.

SOME extraordinary Business calling me to *London*, it was my Fortune to lodge in the House of a very honest Man, in which there were Lodgers of several Religions. Among the rest, with whom my Residence here soon brought me
acquaint-

acquainted, was a young Gentlewoman bred by her Parents in the strictest Biggotry of the Church of *Rome*. The modest and prudent Conduct of this young Woman made me wish my self able to convince her of the Idolatrous Errors of that Religion, and reconcile her to the Church of *England*.

I soon found that all that she knew of her Religion was, that she was to believe, as the Church believ'd; that is, as the *Priest* thought fit to tell her; and that to urge her to give a Reason of her Belief of any Particular, was only to provoke her to a Passion, not Silence, or any Diffidence in her Cause. And tho' she cou'd not say much for her Religion her self, yet she wou'd recommend Two or Three Books to my Perusal, which wou'd infallibly convince me of the Errors of the *Church of England*, and lead me to a firm Belief in the Doctrines of the *Church of Rome*. But if you think fit (said she) I will bring you to a Gentleman, who will confute all the Tenets of your Religion, and prove them to be not only without any manner of Foundation, but also so very absurd, that no Man of Reason can have the least confidence in them.

I told her that I wou'd wait on her whenever she pleas'd to the Gentleman she mention'd, and hear what he had to say in Proof of so notable an Assertion; for indeed it seem'd something extraordinary, to hear those who rejected the Authority of Reason, and the Use of our Senses in Religious Debates, asserting, that their Opinions only were worthy a Man of Sense and Reason.

I think it was on the 5th of *November*, when I had this Discourse with the the young Lady, and as near as I can remember the 11th of the same Month, when we went together about Seven in the Evening to Mr. *Willis's* Quarters; who, as we were coming away, he not being at home, came in, and the Lady immediately address'd him in this manner.

SIR (said she) I have brought a Gentleman with me to be satisfy'd in some Points of the CATHOLICK RELIGION. Mr. *Willis* seeming eager of his Prey, as he then believ'd me, order'd a Fire to be immediately lighted in a little Back Room, which I am apt to believe he esteems, as it were, Sacred to his Triumphs, many *Protestants* having

ving (as I have been credibly inform'd) been perverted to POPERY in that little Appartment.

THE usual Ceremonies being over, and we all being seated, he began in this manner.

SIR, said he, I wonder to see People groping and seeking every Day after the *Truth*, when it is so easily found, nor is it less strange how any *Protestant*, that is master of any tolerable Reason, can have Confidence in a Religion so false and *absurd*, and really without all manner of Foundation, as that, which you call the Protestant Religion.

THE *Protestants* harbour wrong Notions of the Church of *Rome*. For they call her the *Scarlet Whore of Babylon*, &c. and rail at the Superstition and Idolatry of that Church, which when we come to examine are found to be quite false and groundless.

BUT, Sir, added he, before we can pretend to argue on any Points of Religion, we must first of all lay down a Reason why we are *Christians*—more than we are *Jews*, *Pagans*, or *Mahometans*. We are therefore *Christians*, continu'd he, because we believe in Christ, &c.

I must beg leave to interrupt this his empty Harangue with one Remark, which is this, that here he is pleas'd to own the *Truth*, that before we can argue upon any Points of Religion, we must first of all lay down a Reason why we are *Christians*, &c. and yet when I had fix'd this as the State of the Question first of all to be decided, he grows uneasy at my Method, and calls it *beginning at the wrong End of the Question*. 'Tis true in this Harangue, he only gives the Reason of our being call'd *Christians*, and not why we are so, nor does he much better absolve this Duty in his first Letter, in answer to my Question, Whether *Christ* were sent by God or not; as the Reader will very soon discover. But this only *en passant*.

Now, pursu'd he, we have prov'd our selves *Christians*, the next point is to prove which is the *Christian Religion*. The *Romish Religion* has been that, which for many Ages has been own'd for that, and has flourish'd throughout all the World, and acknowledg'd by all to be the true *Christian Religion* till such Time that *Luther* and *Calvin*, bred in the Church of *Rome*, sow'd Heresies amongst us, and impos'd a Religion, as absurd, as it was groundless.

But notwithstanding all their Pretences, and absurd Impositions, this Church has still flourish'd, and Numbers are still daily converted to it. One Proof I will here give you out of your own Bible, that the Church of *Rome* must be the true Church of *Christ*. *Christ* said to *St. Peter*, *Thou art Peter, and upon this Rock will I build my Church, and the Gates of Hell shall not prevail against it.* Now *Christ* must mean the Church of *Rome*, there being no thought of a Protestant Church at that Time.

NOW Sir, concluded he, I hope that I have fully prov'd that the *Romish* Church must be that Church in which we can only expect Salvation, and in no other.

BEFORE I proceed I shall only make one Remark or two on his admirable (I had almost said merry) Proof of the Church of *Rome* being the only true Church from that Text of the Scripture, *because there was no Protestant Church then so much as thought of.* The same Reason may be urg'd that the *Romish* Church, could not be that Church, because there was then no such Church so much as thought of; and if any Particular Church could be call'd the Church built on this Rock of *St. Peter's* Confession, it must have been the Church of *Jerusalem*, where *St. Peter* resided, and not that of *Rome*, it being extremely dubious whether that Apostle was ever at *Rome* or no. But I shall not dwell upon such trifling Arguments, fit only to mislead weak Women and Children; it is sufficient that in the following Dispute, I have demonstrated, that the Church of *Rome* has no Pretence to Infallibility, by having establish'd a Doctrine as fundamental, and necessary to Salvation, which if granted destroys the Foundation of the *Christian Religion*, the Coming of *Christ*, and the very Being of God, and opens such a Door to Infidelity and Atheism, as none of the most profess'd *Deists* or *Atheists* ever pretended, except the *Pyrrhonian* Philosophers, who held that nothing was certain. And when once that Bulwark of *POPERY* is levell'd, all her Doctrines must then be try'd by the Word of God, and no Tenet allow'd but what is found in that, or deduc'd from it; and then there will soon be an End of *Purgatory*, *Praying to Saints*, *Image Worship*, *Augural Confession*, &c.

AFTER

AFTER some Pause, I desir'd him to go on to the Particulars, not at all doubting, but that he wou'd support the *Particulars* of his Religion, with Reasons of the same Size with those he had offer'd for the *General*.

BEFORE, Sir, we enter, said he, into the *Particulars*, give me Leave to give you an Account of Two Protestant Ladies, who came to me on this same Design; and desir'd that I wou'd go along with them to Dr. — of — to dispute upon this Point. I comply'd with their Request, and being come to the Doctor, we enter'd on an oral Dispute, in which having the better of the Argument, the Doctor desir'd, that it might be manag'd for the future in writing; which accordingly was begun, and soon ended to the entire Satisfaction of the Two Ladies, who are now Members of our Church.

THIS I suppose was urg'd to intimidate my Youth, by laying before me a Conquest he had made over a Man superior to me in Learning, and Years. At this I suppose also aim'd his saying, that he once thought himself capable of convincing all Mankind of the Truth of the *Romish* Church. But from this written Dispute mention'd between him and the Doctor, I took the Hint of managing mine in the same way, tho' I believe with different Success.

Now, Sir, said he, we will enter into the Particular Doctrines of our Church; first as to *Purgatory*. By the Word *Purgatory* is meant a Place to purge, and cleanse us from our Sins. Now to prove, that there must be such a Place, I'll quote you a Proof out of your own *Bible*, in which you will find written in *St. John*, except a *Man* be as pure, that is, as free from Sin as a new born Babe he shall not enter into the Kingdom of God; now, continu'd he, it can never be suppos'd, that any Man can go out of this World so pure and free from Sin, as here is by the Scripture requir'd, therefore *Purgatory* is allotted for Men's Souls to go to after Life, and there to remain till they are thoroughly purg'd and be cleans'd from their Sins, and Iniquities, and become pure as a new born Babe, and then to enter into Heaven.

THIS Gentleman, that cou'd pick out a Text of Scripture, from whence to derive a Necessity of the Existence of such a Place as *Purgatory*, if he had consulted the very Aim and End of the Scriptures, wou'd have found another

fort of Purgation, that renders the Soul pure, as a new born Babe. And that is a sincere Repentance of our Sins, and a perfect turning to God, to which Conditions of Mind God has promis'd the State of Innocence or Heaven, tho' their Sins were red as Scarlet, yet the Minute of a true Repentance, they are set as far from us as the East is from the West; that is, we are entirely freed from them, and therefore are as pure as a Babe newly born. But these Arguments are so weak, that they do not require a serious Answer.

BUT to draw towards a Conclusion of the Harangue of this formidable Confuter of our Protestant Divines, he thus goes on.

NOW as to *Transubstantiation*, which you Protestants think impossible, I will make it as plain as Two and Two make Four, and remove all those Difficulties, which at this Time are any Obstruction to your Belief; and that by Two Quotations, one out of your *Catechism*, and the other out of your *Bible*. That of the *Bible* St. *John*, cap. 6. verse 54 to 59. that which is in the *Catechism* in these Questions, What is in the Sacrament? The outward Thing Bread and Wine. What is the inward Thing signify'd? The real Body and Blood of Christ which are verily, and indeed taken in the Lords Supper. Some few more Arguments he us'd on this Head, but those still weaker than what I have set down. This being the chief Point of the Present Dispute, I have no need to answer what he says in this Place. I shall only observe that his Proof from the *Catechism*, is still weaker than that from St. *John*, since it is plain that let the Words be never so Specious for his Opinion, taking them in his Sense, it must be evident that the Sense that our Church takes them in, is not the same, since then there cou'd be no Dispute between the Two Churches if they agreed in their Meaning. So that I cannot see of what Consequence his quoting of this is to prove his Assertion, when every Man must be judge of his Terms and in what Sense he means them.

MY Patience being now quite spent, and finding there would be no Room for me to put in a Word, where nothing material cou'd be said, without having as great a Library and Skill in the Languages, and the Consultation of Books, that wou'd require an Age to go thorough the Controversy,

troverſy. I took my Leave of him about Ten that Evening; and in Two or Three Days I ſent him the following Letter, with the Enclos'd, from which to this Time the Diſpute has been manag'd very leiſurely, for he ſeldom was very ſpeedy in his Answers, as will be ſeen from the Dates of his Letters.

LETTER I.

To Mr. WILLIS, *Theſe,*

SIR,

HOPING that you will be pleas'd to give me the ſame Liberty, as other Gentlemen have had before me, to put ſome Questions, which I deſire you wou'd be pleas'd to Answer in Writing; For being fully bent to go thorough a Buſineſs of ſo great Importance, I take this to be the propereſt Method, having not that moſt excellent way, which you are ſo perfect a Maſter of, viz. of Arguing without Paſſion,

I am, Yours

Novemb. 15.

1713.

The Encloſed.

SIR,

THE Deſign of this Diſpute being not Victory but Truth, we ſhall therefore take the moſt eaſy, moſt plain, and the ſhorteſt way of arriving at that Truth, which is of ſo very great Importance.

I ſhall for this Reaſon avoid the way of the Schools, which is only the Art of wrangling, and proceed in the
Socratick

Secretick Method; that is, of plain and familiar Question and Answer.

As I shall put the Question plainly, and in intelligible Words, so I expect, that the Answer be made in Words as plain and positive, and such as you will stand by.

All Disputes about the particular Divisions of the *Christian Religion* seem very superfluous, till the Foundation of the whole be certainly establish'd. So that it is to no Purpose to dispute whether the *Greek Church*, or the *Latin*, the *Armenian*, or the *Arian*, the *Protestant*, or the *Roman* be the true *Church*, out of which there is no *Salvation* till we know whether *Christ Jesus*, who founded some *Church* was sent from God or not.

I therefore first ask whether *Christ Jesus* was sent from God or not?

I am, Sir,

Your most Humble Servant,

JOHN BATTERSBY.

SIR,

YOUR Question, *Whether Christ Jesus were sent by God*, depends upon the validity of the *Christian Religion*, which cannot be prov'd True but by a Tradition, for the Scriptures prove nothing in our Case, because they are receiv'd for the Word of God by the same Authority.

TRADITIONS are either True or False, or both, all Traditions may not be True, therefore it concerns me to shew, that the Tradition which relates to Sacred Story is of those, that are True.

THE Christian Religion has gain'd such a Credit throughout the World, that if a Man were to deny it, he would be thought more unreasonable, than if he were to deny his

his own being of Generation, because he has no Remembrance of his Conception, or Birth; or of the Existence of such a Place as *Paris*, because he has never seen it.

I grant, that there are different ways of gaining Credit, or Authority, one is by Violence, another by Deceit, a third by a Temporal Interest in the Thing propos'd, and a fourth by the Evidence, which the Thing propos'd carries in it self; therefore I am to shew, that the Credit of Christianity comes not by either of the former, but by the last of these ways.

By Violence it cou'd not be, for the Recommenders of the Gospel were void of all Temporal Power.

NOR could there be Deceit or Artifice in the Propagators, for they sincerely left all to follow their Lord, underwent Torments in his Service, and would die rather than desert the Cause.

NOR could any Temporal Invitation gain a Credit to it, for he, that became a Christian in the two or three Centuries after Christ, had nothing in view as to the Body, but Reproach, Persecution and Death.

THEREFORE I am to prove, that the Thing propos'd, bore it's own Evidence, by which it obtained the Credit it now has in the World.

THE *Christian Religion* had the gift of true and real Miracles, which were the Evidence of its being from God, and by that undeniable Testimony it gain'd so upon the *Jews* and *Gentiles*, as to bring 'em to a Contempt of all things Temporal, and of Death it self in the Vindication of a Truth so strongly reveal'd.

If Christ and his Apostles had taught any Untruths, the gift of Miracles would have fail'd 'em; for God would not have given his Seal to a Lye, and Miracles always accompanying the Propagators of the Gospel, they gain'd Proselytes in all the Countries they came into, so that before the Deaths of the Apostles, great Numbers in many different Nations were added to the Church, notwithstanding the Oppositions of Civil Powers, and the sanguinary Laws that were made to prevent 'em; and by the continuance of Miracles it prevail'd over most Nations and their Rulers; and such Credit had our *Saviour* gain'd in his Time upon Earth,
that

that he rais'd the Admiration even of many, that never receiv'd the Faith; for *Josephus* gives an Account of him, which, as far as it goes, corresponds with that given by his own Disciples, and if the Question requires it, many other Testimonies of *Jews* and *Gentiles* might be produc'd.

IF there had been any intended Cheat in it's Propagation, if some few could have preserv'd the Secret, yet it is unreasonable to think, that many Thousands should, and at the peril of their Lives too.

THE great end of Deceit is Gain, therefore it is altogether improbable, that many Thousands should unite in the Propagation of a Lye, and when they knew it would be rewarded with Poverty, Persecution and Death. But if that were probable, yet it is not consistent with Reason, that many different Nations, who had different Interests to preserve, and who were implacable Enemies in things Temporal, should so unanimously agree to deliver this Thing to Posterity, unless it had an Evidence, which they, as rational Beings, cou'd not resist, and especially if we consider, that they themselves were depriv'd of many Temporal Enjoyments in the Reception of it.

IF such a Tradition may be deem'd False, it will be impossible for us to take any thing for Truth, but what our own Eyes must see, which Opinion would cast a Man out of the Number of Sociable Beings; and if what I have said proves the Truth of Christianity, it cannot remain a Question, whether Christ Jesus were sent by God or not, because that is the first Principle in the Christian Religion. I attend all farther Commands, and they shall be obey'd to the utmost of the Power of,

SIR,

Receiv'd this November,
18th 1713.

Your most

Humble Servant

THO. WILLIS.

SIR,

Nov. 20.

IN my Introduction to the Question I sent you, I desir'd a full, plain, and clear Answer to it, without multiplicity of Words, or precarious Arguments, which bear little or no weight. But to my surprize, I receive a Letter of some length, all but a very few Lines, of which are little or nothing to the Question.

As for your Account of *Tradition*, it is nothing to the Purpose, and very precarious, and might be as it has been, drawn out into a Controversie of Volumes; nor do you distinguish between Oral and Written *Tradition*, which is a Controversie sufficiently known between the *Advocates* of the *Romish*, and the *Protestant* Communion. I foresaw this, and that made me endeavour to bring the Controversie between us into so narrow a Compals as that Question—Whether *Christ Jesus* was sent from God or not? The only plain and unequivocal Answer, had been for you to have said, That he was sent from God, or that he was not: Upon which I shou'd have again demanded a certain evident and infallible Evidence of his *Divine Mission*. This you seem in one Paragraph to anticipate, by saying, that *The Christian Religion had the Gift of true and real Miracles, which were the Evidence of its being from God, and by that UNDENIABLE Testimony it gain'd so upon the Jews and the Gentiles, &c.*

In the next Paragraph you tell us, *That God wou'd not have given his Seal (viz. of Miracles) to a Lie.*

WHEREFORE I suppose you wou'd have me think that these Miracles were an infallible Proof of the *Divine Mission* of *Christ*, and that we cannot be deceiv'd by this Seal of God.

I may therefore conclude, that you assign *Christ's* Miracles for a Proof of his *Divine Mission*. But that is no Proof which can deceive us; the Proof of a Thing being a certain Evidence of the Truth of it; by which we cannot be deceiv'd. For if the Proof have not this Quality of certainty, it amounts to no more than a bare Probability at most, and we may be in the Wrong as well as in the Right, which in this Case is of very dangerous Consequence, since

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if

if *Christ* shou'd not be sent from God, we run (by believing his Doctrine) the Hazard of *Idolatry* and *Imposture*. I therefore ask you whether you mean, that the Miracles of *Christ* are an infallible Proof that *Christ* had his *Mission* from God himself ? To this Question I desire your positive Answer in plain and clear Words, like a Man who seriously seeks the Truth.

As for the spreading of the Gospel, and the Number of Believers it is of no manner of Consequence ; *Mahometism* made a swifter Progress, has spread into more Countries, and has a more numerous Body of Followers. The *Romanists* are not the largest Body of Christians, the *Greek Church*, *Armenians*, and all the *Protestants* out number them ; and all the profess'd *Idolaters* of the World are much the greater part of Mankind. The only certain Proof therefore of the *Divine Mission* of *Christ* are his Miracles, in which no other Opinion contends with him. I therefore insist on a plain and positive Answer to the former Question.

Sir, Yours.

SIR,

I AM sorry my last prov'd so tedious to you, but it was more my Misfortune, because each superfluous Word took the time I could have found a full Employment for another way.

I apprehend you under some mistake, in saying, *Tradition is not to our purpose*, for I know of no way of proving any thing of the kind in time past without it ; nor was the *Distinction* you require between the *Oral* and *Written* so necessary as you seem to make it, because a *Written Tradition* is nothing without *Oral*.

SUPPOSING you would expect a Proof of the *Divine Mission* to your first Question, made me anticipate not to lengthen the Dispute as you imagin, but to hasten its period ; believing that the next in Course would be a demand of that very Proof which I there endeavour'd to make.

I did assign *Christ's* Miracles as a Proof of his *Divine Mission*, for its being his own Method, induc'd me to believe I could not use a better; for he told the *Jews*, That unless he had done greater things, than had been done before, they had no Reason to receive him under his Character. To this might be added, the Descent of the *Holy Ghost*, and the Predictions of inspired Men under the Law; but that being the mark of every extraordinary Messenger from God to Mankind, I reckon it amounts to as certain a Proof, as can be had of a Thing, for this is the Voice of Heaven, and greater Proof than that methinks should not be expected.

You take Notice of the *Progress of Mahometism*, but that you may observe was by Violence, when *Christianity* gain'd Credit against the Force of all the Temporal Powers on Earth.

WHETHER the Romanists are the largest Body of Christians or not is not in the Question, therefore to that I only say, that it may be prov'd that they are, if that should ever be a Question?

If any other Difficulties should arise upon what I now offer, I should be glad to be made acquainted with them; and if I had not been seiz'd with a violent Vomiting you had been written to sooner, by

Sir,

Your Obedient

Servant,

Novemb. 25th:

1713.

THO. WILLIS.

Novemb. 27.

SIR,

THO' I differ in your Opinion of Oral and Written Tradition, yet not to be led out of the Way, by Things alien to the present Question, I must again accuse you of

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not

not keeping to the Point, in such close, clear, and plain Terms as I require, and indeed as the just Search into Truth does demand.

BUT I take you at your Word in the fourth Paragraph of your Second Letter, *that you do assign Christ's Miracles as a Proof* (you shou'd have said an infallible Proof, for in some Sense, a Probability is call'd so) *of his Divine Mission*— But you seem to evade the Force of the Question, when you say, *that it amounts to as certain a Proof as can be of a Thing*, because a Deist wou'd say, that you mean that it is as strong a Proof as the Matter will bear, and so deduce their impious Consequence, that you allow there is no certain or infallible Proof of the Thing to be expected. Your following Words to me indeed wou'd make me believe that you understand it to be an infallible Proof, when you call it *THE VOICE OF HEAVEN*, and that (if we know it to be such) must certainly be allow'd by all rational Creatures to be infallible, or to be infallibly depended upon.

I therefore ask you how we are to know when a Miracle is perform'd. That is, how we know whether the Dead are rais'd, the Lame Walk, the Blind See, and the like. I desire you wou'd answer closely.

By this you find we have, in our Dispute, no Occasion for *Tradition*, the Fact being by me acknowledg'd, as indubitable.

I am Sir,

Your Humble Servant, &c.

SIR,

AS to the Certainty of a Miracle, I am to say, that if I saw a Child of mine Dead, and laid in the Grave, and he were to be restor'd to me again in some Days or Weeks after, I think I ought not to doubt of a Miracles being wrought in his Restoration.

The

THE same of the Lame, Blind, &c.

It may be objected, that these may be done by the help of the Devil, as it was objected to our Saviour himself. The Devil may do very surprizing Things, but I think he was never permitted to restore a Soul to its Body : Then what he has done was in Confirmation of unwarrantable Liberties, that lead to Perdition, but not in Confirmation of the Doctrines of Prayer and Pennance, which were what our Saviour taught.

As *Moses's* Rod devour'd those of the *Soothsayers* of *Agypt*, in Proof of his *Missions* being from God ; so our Saviour, to put it out of all Doubt of the Things which he did being done by Divine Authority, raised himself from the Dead, a thing never done before, which was a certain Proof of his Divinity.

You had receiv'd this before, if my Eyes would have allow'd it,

I am Sir,

Your Humble Servant,

Decemb. 10.

1713.

THO. WILLIS.

Decemb. 11.

SIR,

I AM sorry your Eyes have so long delay'd the short Answer, I requir'd to my short Question ; which indeed the first Paragraph of your Letter does in some measure do. For my Question was, *How we do know when a Miracle is done, that is, Whether the Dead be rais'd, the Lame Walk, the Blind See, and the like*

To this you reply thus,— *As to the certainty of a Miracle, I am to say, that if I saw a Child of mine Dead and laid in the Grave,*

Grave, and he were to be restor'd to me again in some Days or Weeks after, I think I ought not to doubt of a Miracles being wrought in his Restoration.

I suppose you mean that you cannot doubt your Eyes, when you see your Child rais'd, &c. this had been plainer and closer, and more agreeable to my desire.

You therefore agree that the Jews, who saw Christ raise the Dead, cure the Lame and the Blind, were inexcuseable in not believing in him, because their Eyes cou'd not deceive them in those Objects presented to them on these Occasions. For Christ himself says, that if such Works had been done in Sodom and Gomorah, they wou'd have repented and believ'd: Which had not been just if the Jews cou'd not depend infallibly on what they saw to be matter of Fact?

I therefore again demand, whether the Jews were infallibly certain that these Miracles of Christ were actually done. That is, they cou'd not be deceiv'd in what they saw?

THREE Words will answer this Question.

I am, Sir,

Your Humble Servant, &c.

SIR,

I HOPE you think it not a Disrespect that I am backward in my Answers, for I can assure you it is occasion'd by Indisposition, and Business interposing; for which I hope some allowance will be made me.

THE want of Date to my last is owing to forgetfulness.

It seems to me that the Jews could not be deceiv'd in what our Saviour did; therefore I conclude 'em infallibly assur'd of those being True and Real Miracles, which were wrought in their Presence.

I am, Sir,

Your most Humble Servant,

Decemb. 15.

1713.

THO. WILLIS.

Decemb. 15.

SIR,

YOU in yours, of the 15th Instant, do at last allow, that the *Jews* were infallibly assur'd of the Reality of our Saviour's Miracles; that is, the Eyes of the *Jews* cou'd not be deceiv'd in their proper Objects, and those in their proper Position.

GOD, therefore, appealing to the Certainty of the Senses judging of their Objects in their proper Position, cou'd establish no Doctrine as the Superstructure, which must destroy the Certainty of the very Foundation of the whole; for that would be to oppose his own Design of establishing the *Christian Religion* it self. For if on one side he obliges us to yield our Assent to the Miracles he has been pleas'd to perform under Pain of Reprobation; and on the other side obliges us to believe, that these very Evidences deceive us every Day in an Object in its true Position, under Pain of Damnation, Man is sure to be damn'd on both sides, which is a flat Contradiction, and contrary to the Goodness, nay Truth and Justice of God, and cannot therefore be true.

Now any Church that does impose an Article of Faith, and Terms of Salvation, which destroys this infallible Evidence of the *Christian Religion* it self, cannot be a *Christian Church*.

I ask, therefore, Whether the Church of *Rome* does not oblige her Communicants to believe *Transubstantiation*, as an Article of Faith necessary to Salvation. That is, Whether she does not oblige her Congregation to believe, that the Bread and Wine, which by the infallible Judgment of our Eyes, Tastes, and Feeling, are only Bread and Wine or the real Body and Blood of *Jesus Christ*, and not real Bread and Wine.

I desire a plain positive Answer to this,

Who am, Sir, Yours.

SIR,

SIR,

YOUR saying, *I do at last allow, &c.* is as if you did suppose, I would evade so great a Truth, and as if you had dragg'd me to the acknowledgment of it against my Will.

To Convince you of a mistake, I refer you to my first Letter, where you find as strong an acknowledgment as in my last; but not knowing that you intended to direct the Argument this way, I only regarded the State of the Question in my Answers, and not your Intention, which was unknown to me; but if you had signify'd your Intention in your first, the Answer to it should have had the same, or stronger Words than were used in my last, for I am for no *Catch* in Controversie; for if I were capable of Concealing or Disguising a necessary Truth, either for Victory, or any other Temporal end, I must be an undoubted Enemy to God and Man.

FAITH being Mysterious, is not the object of our Senses, for he that would have it so, must destroy the Mystery, and consequently Faith it self; Therefore the Senses are not to be appeal'd to in the Case, for they determine nothing where they have no Authority.

IN Proof of the *Divine Mission* the Senses were absolutely necessary, else we should not have known that the Messenger of our Faith came from God; but then we are to observe, that the Credentials of the Messenger are one thing, and what the Messenger had to propose was quite another; therefore I cannot see why it should follow, that the Senses must enter into the Mysteries of God, because they bear witness to his Messenger; Excuse me, Sir, if I say that your Parallel fails, and that the Question requires another state.

As I cannot suppose you so vain as to Dispute for Victory, I must tell you, that the only way of arriving at Truth, is to begin at the right end of the Argument, else we must run a much greater length, and end with less satisfaction; but if we settle that General into which this and all other Particulars must Resolve, and then go thorough
every

every Particular in its proper place, your Light through the whole will be the stronger, the Argument abundantly the shorter, and Time saved to

Sir, Your Humble Servant,

Decemb. 20.

1713.

THO. WILLIS.

SIR,

Decemb. 22.

I Have yours of the 20th before me, which is a Proof, that if I had plainly at first let you into my Design, we shou'd by this time have been far from the Point in Hand. You are pleas'd to call this way of proceeding a *Catch*; it is no hard matter to give an invidious Term to the most plain and honest Conduct, and I doubt not but the Babling Wranglers of *Greece* did the same to *Socrates*, on his taking up this fair method of plain Question and Answer, to convict them out of their own Concessions.

I have look'd back to your first Letter, but can find no such strong Concession as in your last, in these Words, *Therefore I conclude them (viz. the Jews in judging of Miracles by their Senses) infallibly assur'd of those being true and real Miracles wrought in their Presence.*

FROM this Concession, I justly and plainly infer'd, God therefore appealing to the Certainty of the Senses, judging of their Objects in their proper Position, cou'd establish no Doctrine as the Superstructure, which must destroy the very Foundation of the whole; for that wou'd be to oppose his own Design of establishing the Christian Religion it self. For if on one side he obliges us to yield our Assent to the Miracles he has been pleas'd to perform under Pain of Reprobation; and on the other side obliges us to believe, that those very Evidences deceive us every Day, in an Object in its true Position, under Pain of Damnation, Man is sure to be damn'd on both sides, which is a flat Contradiction, and contrary to the Goodness, nay the Truth of God, and cannot therefore be true.

Now any Church that does impose an Article of Faith, and Terms of Salvation, which destroys this infallible Evidence of the Christian Religion it self, cannot be a Christian Church.

Ask therefore, Whether the Church of Rome does not oblige her Communicants to believe Transubstantiation, as an Article of Faith necessary to Salvation? That is, Whether she does not oblige her Congregation to believe that the Bread and Wine, which by the infallible Judgment of our Eyes, Tastes and Feeling, are only Bread and Wine, are the real Body and Blood of Christ? And not real Bread and Wine.

To this I desir'd your plain and positive Answer. But instead of that plain and positive Answer to the Point in hand, you, without any real Ground, run into a Complaint, as if you were not fairly dealt with in the Dispute; and at last tell me that it is Faith and Mystery, and not the Object of our Senses; but by your leave, Sir, that Assertion is yet to be prov'd; for it is deny'd to be a Mystery, because all other Mysteries of the *Christian Religion* are in things in which the Senses are not at all concern'd, as in the Nature, Mode, or Manner of the Existence of God, and his Mode or Manner of his Union with Humane Nature, to an adequate Knowledge of which God has given us no adequate means of arriving; nor do they at all interfere with our Senses, which you have acknowledg'd to be infallible in their Judgment of their proper Objects. But certainly Bread and Wine are as proper Objects of our Senses, as the raising the Dead, and curing the Lame and the Blind. So that my last quoted Difficulty and Question remains in full Force, till you can prove that the Senses are both fallible and infallible in their proper Objects.

AND this Method I took to shorten the Dispute, for what need is there of going thorough every Particular, controverted between the Churches of *Rome* and *England*; whereas if I can prove that the Church of *Rome* in spite of Pretences to Infallibility has establish'd one Doctrine Destructive of the whole *Christian Religion*, it is sufficient to destroy her as a true and infallible Church, and then of what Importance is it to enquire how many more Errors she has broach'd, when this is sufficient to counsel me to have no Confidence in her.

THERE is therefore no need of altering the State of the Question, to shorten the Dispute, which cannot be spun out into any great length, if you wou'd be so candid as to answer closely to the Questions I shall ask you.

You

You must not, Sir, consider me as of any particular Church, for then you have Resource to the poorest of Arguments, which are call'd *Argumenta ad Hominem*. We know there are a great many Christians who deny all manner of Mysteries in Religion, and tho' I am not of their Opinion, yet, with the Church of *England*, I must deny that there is any Mystery (or can be any of any Obligation) that shall destroy the Foundation of the *Christian Religion* it self. For there is no Absurdity that may not be maintain'd, if you shall allow the Infallibility of the Senses in one Instance and deny it another, for that is to let in an universal Scepticism, and make all things uncertain. Still therefore take which side you will the Fallibility or Infallibility of the Senses: Or prove that Bread and Wine are not the Objects of Sense.

SIR, if you are that lover of Truth which you seem to desire to be thought, I conjure you by the God of Truth to keep to the Point, and ramble not at this rate from what you find you cannot with any shew of Reason reply to; and endeavour to start a new Question, when the very fundamental of all Questions lies unregarded by you.

YOUR Answer therefore to my former Question is still insisted on, and must till you vouchsafe to give a more convincing proof that it shou'd not. *I am, Sir, &c.*

SIR,

Jan. 5. 1713.

WERE it not for the Return of my Inflammation, and that I am now in a Course of Als's-Milk, against a Consumption, I had written sooner to your last, by which I find that I cannot write to be understood; tho' I endeavour to write with all the clearness in my Power.

ONE thing I have to Complain of, *viz.* that you shou'd charge me with saying, *That you were upon the Catch*, and then for advancing that Severity, and Invective against me, that I find in your last; Read my Letter again, and you will find your self under a Mistake as to the former; and if you will be at the trouble of Reading all my Letters, you will not find cause in any of 'em for all this Warmth.

YOU might first consider, that this thing was not of my seeking; secondly, that it is the very reverse of an advantage

tage to me, for no Man in *England* has less Time to spare than I have, so that every Moment that is used in this way is taken from my Family and Business, to gratifie you, which methinks should intitle me to better Usage.

THE Method propos'd in yours, could not be allow'd, if the Thing in hand were to continue, for you would not be consider'd a Member of any Church, but would have me under Limitation; These are unequal Terms that would destroy all order, and run the Argument into a greater length than my Time will suffer me to go.

IF Truth be the thing contended for, I cannot see why the Method I propos'd should be rejected, for the Experience I have had assures me that is the nearest way to it; and since I am obliged to husband my Time the best I can, I cannot engage in any tedious matter.

I therefore decline arguing upon this Point till we come to its proper Place, for there is a General into which this Particular must Resolve, and in the Settlement of the General the Particular may Receive a Light that cannot come by any other way. But tho' it be not in the Order I could wish, yet I shall offer a Word or two to your last Question, *Whether Bread and Wine are the objects of Sense?* I grant they are, but what you call Bread and Wine in the Sacrament, I deny to be such, therefore cannot allow what is there to be the Object of Sense.

THE accidents of Bread and Wine remain after Consecration, but the Species are changed, so the Accidents are Objects of the Senses, but the Species are not: The Accidents of a Thing are not the Thing it self; therefore the Accidents of Bread and Wine are not Bread and Wine; and tho' the Accidents of Bread and Wine remain, yet Bread Wine does not, as many of your most considerable Divines have allowed, in Conjunction with the Word of God, and the Fathers of all Ages; so that the Senses are no ways concern'd in the Case: But if their Authority were any thing here, where would the Mystery be that is allowed by all to be in the Blessed Sacrament.

THEN you wonder why the Infallibility of the Senses should be allowed in one Instance, as that of the *Divine Mission*, and yet be denied in another, as in that of *Transubstantiation*, the Reason is, because one is the Proper Object of our Senses and the other of our Faith.

I distinguished in my last for your better Satisfaction, but you are silent to that Distinction, tho' it is of considerable Moment; Therefore I crave leave to offer it again.

You will allow a Difference between a Messenger and the Message; therefore the means used to assure me of this his being a Messenger from God, are not for that Reason applicable to the Things contain'd in the Message, in order to such an Information, as is necessary for me to have; so one Prince that receives a Minister from another, must have recourse to his Senses, for the truth of the Credentials of the Messenger; but it does not therefore follow that the Senses must bring him to the Knowledge of all that is contain'd in the Message, and if some things be contain'd in the Message that are not Objects of the Senses, and the Senses could impose upon you in misrepresenting them, must it follow from thence that you must doubt the truth of the Credentials, because the same Senses are their proper Evidence.

Reason cannot tell me how Three make One, and because my Reason is used in proof of the *Divine Mission*, must it follow from thence that the Truth of the *Divine Mission* ought to be question'd. I shall add no more than that I am,

SIR, Your most

Humble Servant

THO. WILLIS.

SIR,

Jan. 15.

YOURS of the 5th of *January* is at last come to my Hands, and I find it consists of Complaints, and some offers at Argument. As to the Complaints, upon looking back to your Letter, I find that there is Cause for what I said in all appearance; but if the Heat of my Youth has made me put a wrong Construction on your Words, I beg your Pardon, tho' it be a Proof that an Oral Dispute was the most improper Thing in the World for me to engage in. And this was the Reason that I proposed that the present Controversie shou'd be manag'd by the Pen; which indeed was not of your seeking, nor the engaging in it at all of mine.

ANOTHER

ANOTHER Complaint you make is, *That I wou'd not be consider'd as a Member of any Church* (of any particular Church you shou'd have said) *but wou'd have you under Limitation; and these call unequal Terms, and wou'd destroy all Order, and run the Argument into a greater Length, than your Time will suffer you to go.*

IN answer to this I say, that from my Letter it is plain that the Reason of my saying so was to shorten the Dispute, by cutting off all those Arguments drawn from Doctor's Opinions of this side or that; which fill so many Volumes with Authoritative Argument, which have no manner of intrinsick Force, and which you have fall'n into in your last, where you tell me, *that many of our most considerable Divines have allow'd, in Conjunction with the Word of God, and the Fathers of all Ages, the Transmutation of Bread and Wine into the Body and Blood of Christ.* Now, Sir, to examine the Validity of this Assertion, Recourse must be had to the Originals of those *many Divines* of ours, and the Fathers of all Ages; or we must take them as quoted by other Writers. If the former, I think not only many Books, but a great deal of Time, and Skill in more than one Language are absolutely necessary. And the Proof of this Point alone wou'd be more prolix by Ten Thousand Times, than the Method I have propos'd (if you wou'd make use of no more Words, than are absolutely necessary, and keep close to the Point) cou'd do if it swell'd much more than I have reason to expect this will do. Or on the other side, we must content our selves with the Quotations of others. But then what Disputes must arise about the sincerity of the Quotations and their Interpretations, so that this at last must resolve into a Consultation of the Originals, and as incumber'd, that is with long Disquisitions as I have shewn already. On the contrary I shall shew, that I have all a long endeavour'd to shorten the Dispute, by throwing off Authorities, and reducing so voluminous and manifold a Dispute, as that between the Churches of *Rome* and *England* to that one Point of the *Foundation of Christianity* it self, which is the General that must be prov'd before any Particular can be enter'd upon.

BESIDES the Terms of exempting the Considerations of what I say, from the Notions of any particular Church, are not so unequal, as you seem to apprehend, since every Member of the Church of *England* is free to examine and judge for himself, to accept or reject any Doctrine, however espoused or allow'd by any particular Doctors of that Church, since every Member

ber is to be sav'd by his own Faith, and not that of another ; on the contrary, you, as a Member of the *Romish* Church, are not to Examine any, but to submit to them all as Impositions of the Church of *Rome* and her Doctors, and I only assum'd that Privilege of not being concluded by the Teachers of any particular Church, to shut out the Noisy Pretensions of Authorities ; whereas the Scripture and Reason are the only Arguments that any Protestant is oblig'd to stand by. So that allowing my self to be of the Church of *England* does not deprive me of that Advantage, since that equally allows me to reject whatever appears inconsistent with the Word of God, and Right Reason, which is always consonant with the Holy Scriptures.

BUT by your insisting upon these as unequal Terms, it looks as if your Church had nothing to say against any other Body or Opinion of Christianity, but against those of the Church of *England*, and that you gave up your Cause to all others who dissent from her. If this be not the Case I can see no inequality in the Terms proposed by me in my last, to which you make this Exception. Nay it is plain from what I have now urg'd, that, as a Member of the Church of *England*, I have still the same Privileges I aim'd at in that Exemption, by which therefore there was no Injury offer'd you, nor any Hardships put upon you. Nay, by cutting off Authorities, it is plain that the Argument must be very much shorten'd, and that Time, which seems so precious to you, very much sav'd.

YOUR next Paragraph tells me——That——*If Truth be the Thing contended for, you cannot see why the Method you proposed shou'd be rejected. The Experience you have had assures you that it is the nearest way to it, &c.*

Now I can find no Method proposed by you at all in the last Paragraph of your last Letter before this, I mean of the 20th of *Decemb.* you seem to hint at one in these Words.

As I cannot suppose you so vain as to dispute for Victory, I must tell you, That the only way of arriving at Truth, is to begin at the Right End of the Argument, else we must run a much greater Length, and end with less Satisfaction ; but if we settle that General into which this and all other Particulars must resolve, and then go thorough every Particular in its proper place, your Light through the whole will be the stronger, and the Arguments abundantly shorter, &c.

THESE Words are too obscure to inform us what you call the Right End of the Argument, or what Method you design to pursue on that Right End : so that I cannot discover the least

least Ground for your Wonder that your Method proposed is rejected, when from your Words we cannot find any Method at all laid down.

BUT when I shall, before the Conclusion of this Letter, lay down the Rise and Progress of this present Controversie between us, I doubt not but that I shall make it appear, that we begun at the right end of the Argument, and that it cannot be run into that length, with any show of the Love of Truth, of which you seem so very apprehensive.

I do suppose that by the Right End of the Argument you mean the *Infallibility of the Church*, which if allow'd, indeed, would save us the trouble of examining any Particulars at all, for to what purpose should we dispute any Particular Opinions of a Church, which we allow infallible in imposing whatever she pleases. This I foresaw, and for that Reason chose the Point of the Foundation of Christianity, which being establish'd, the Infallibility of the Church, as by the sequel will appear, falls to the Ground at once. For having consider'd that the Dispute about the Churches *Infallibility* have been very voluminous, and never fairly conclusive; I rather chose a Point that by no means required so much Time, and such various and disputed Authorities as the other did; - but may be decided in much fewer Words than have been already made use of about it, if you would have been so candid as to have kept as close to the Point as I have done. And this may be the Reason, I suppose, that you tell me in the next Paragraph, *That you shall decline Arguing on this Point, viz. Transubstantiation, till it comes in its proper Place. For there is a General, you go on as in the former Letter, into which this Particular must resolve; and in the Settlement of the General the Particular may receive a fresh Light that cannot come by any other way, &c.*

THIS is obscure as the before quoted Paragraph of your former Letter, and I suppose comes to the same Point, that *Transubstantiation* is what you cannot maintain, but by having the Infallibility of the Church allow'd you. But that is a Postulation that never can be granted, and never yet was prov'd, tho' the Arguments upon that head are swell'd into many large Volumes, and require the Knowledge of Tongues and Books to go thorough. Whereas it will be plain from my drawing up the State of the Question between us, that this may be fully dispatch'd in the compass of a Sheet of Paper.

BUT

BUT all this being but Conjecture raised by the Obscurity of your Words I shall not pursue it, but come to that Word or two you are pleas'd to vouchsafe to offer to my last Question—Whether *Bread and Wine* be not the Objects of the Senses?

I grant they are (say you) but then add—But what you call *Bread and Wine* in the Sacrament I deny to be such, and therefore cannot allow what is there to be the Objects of the Senses

THE Accidents of *Bread and Wine* remain after Consecration, but the Species are chang'd, so the Accidents are the Objects of the Senses, but the Species are not. The Accidents of a Thing are not the Thing it self; therefore the Accidents of *Bread and Wine* are not *Bread and Wine*; and tho' the Accidents of *Bread and Wine* remain, yet the *Bread and Wine* does not, as many of your most considerable Divines have allow'd, in Conjunction with the Word of God and the Fathers of all Ages. So that the Senses are no ways concern'd in this Case; but if their Authority were any thing here, where wou'd the Mystery be that is allow'd by all to be in the Blessed Sacrament.

YOU first here grant that *Bread and Wine* are the Objects of the Senses, and you have formerly granted that the Senses are infallible Judges of their Objects in their proper Position; but then you very surprizingly tell me, that what I call *Bread and Wine* in the Sacrament you deny to be such.

THERE was a *Greek* Philosopher almost as extravagant in his denyals as you, and he deny'd that there was any Motion, all the Refutation he was thought worthy of, was to get up and walk before him, which was a sufficient proof of Motion. But you are still more extraordinary than this whimsical *Greek*; for when you have just own'd that *Bread and Wine* are the Objects of the Senses and confess'd their Judgment infallible, you presently deny that to be *Bread and Wine* which those Evidences declare to be so. Is not this in one Breath, to own and deny the Infallibility of the Senses, and by Consequence to destroy the Foundation of the *Christian Religion*? For as for Messenger and Message, Credentials, &c. I shall confute them immediately, after I have gone thorough yet a more Childish Argument, that is, the distinction between the Accident and Subject, which you call the Species.

THE Accidents of *Bread and Wine* remain, you say, after Consecration, but the Species are chang'd, so the Accidents are the Objects of the Senses, the Species are not.

HERE to have been intelligible you shou'd have defin'd, that Terms, Accidents, and Species, which to all who have not read *Aristotle* are unintelligible Words. When first the Church of *Rome* advanc'd and spread this Doctrine of *Transubstantiation*, which was 1200 Years after Christ that Church receiv'd the *Aristotelick Philosophy*, before entirely rejected by the Christian World all the Learned among the Primitive Christians being *Platonists*. But when the

Cunning Men of those Times had found this Distinction, *Aristotle's* Philosophy was receiv'd and that of *Plato* rejected.

Thus much, in short, of the History of this Term *Accidents*, now to the Validity of it. *Aristotle*, among a Thousand other Dogmatick Assertions and Absurdities long since exploded by all the World, but the Retainers of *Transubstantiation*, distinguish'd by way of *Abstract* only, between the *Accidents* and the *Subject*, tho' in Reality and Nature there can be no such Distinction, since no Man can form an Idea of *Accidents*, subsisting without the *Subject*, since they are only the Apparent Qualities which make up every *Subject*. As *Whiteness* and the like; but since there is no such Thing as *Whiteness* without inhering in some Subject, Of what import is the Distinction of that *Accident* from its *Subject*?

Now as you have granted that Bread and Wine are the Objects of the Senses, and that those Senses are infallible, I would desire to know what the Eye, the Taste, the Smell, discover in the Bread and Wine before Consecration, which they do not discover after it? The Eyes sees the Wafer to be a small round piece, the Taste finds that it relishes of Water and Flower, and not of those other Tastes which it finds in common Bread; the Eye judges of the Wine by Colour, the Tongue or Palate distinguishes it to be Wine, and that it is Claret, Tent or any other made use of, not *Mountain*, *Malaga*, *Madera*, *Sherry*, or *French White-Wine*; and the Smell has the same difference of Sensations after Consecration as before. Now these are all the Nature of Things, which the Senses can discover in any *Subject*; if there be any more, I desire you wou'd let us know them? But if the Senses find the same Sensations after as before Consecration, the Senses must judge that they are the same Objects without any Change, or else the Senses are deceiv'd, and are no infallible Evidences of the Miracles of *Christ*, and so leave us without any Foundation of the *Christian Religion* it self.

You tell us, in your Argument, that the *Accidents* of a Thing are not the Thing, that I deny and challenge you to prove any real and intelligible Distinction between them, and till that be prov'd this Argument of the *Accidents*, which has been often confuted beyond a Reply, is of no manner of Weight. Nor is there any need of having Recourse to those strange incomprehensible Proofs of a Thing, which in it self is not at all, and for which the Word of God has given not the least solid Ground, as we shall soon see.

BUT, say you--- Were the Authority of the Senses any thing here, where wou'd be the *Mystery* that is allow'd by All to be in the Blessed Sacrament?

If you had perus'd my last with a design to answer all its Particulars, of which you have scarce touch'd one, you need not have put any manner of Force upon, where wou'd then be the *Mystery*, &c. For there I told you that was deny'd to be a *Mystery*, because all other *Mysteries* of the *Christian*

Reli-

Religion are in Things, in which the Senses are not at all concern'd, as in the Nature, Mode or Manner of God's Existence, and the Mode and Manner of his Union with the Humane Nature, to an adequate Knowledge of which God has given us no adequate means of arriving, nor do they at all interfere with our Senses.

If you had consider'd this you might have spar'd the last Paragraph of your Letter, which yet I shall not pass over unanswer'd.

BUT before we leave this Point, we ought to know what you mean by the Word *Mystery*? Else we may fall into a meer Logomachy, and wander we know not where. *Mystery* is a Word of various Senses, it is taken in an ill Sense in the Holy Scriptures themselves, as when it is set as a mark of the *Scarlet Whore of the Seven Hill'd City* in the *Revelation*. It signifies sometimes Rites and Ceremonies, a Sacrament; it was us'd for the *Arcana* of some Religions, which were to be kept secret by the *Priests* only, and not divulg'd to the Profane; and the Feasts of *Ceres* had this Name. It is therefore necessary, that you declare what you mean by this Word *Mystery*, which you assert is allow'd by All to be in the *Blessed Sacrament*. Nay, you must further show, to keep this Assertion of yours within the bounds of Truth, that all who allow a *Mystery* in it both *Papist* and *Protestant* allow it in the same Sense of the Word, or else you wou'd impose a false Authority upon us, for the maintenance of your Argument, which does not appear worthy of a searcher after Truth.

YOUR next Paragraph is this -- *Then you wonder why the Infallibility of the Senses shou'd be allow'd in one Instance, as in that of the Divine Mission, and be deny'd in another, as in that of Transubstantiation. The Reason is, one is the proper Object of our Senses, and the other of our Faith.*

THAT I wonder'd at it then is certain, and that I still wonder at it as true, because I cannot find the difficulty remov'd; you say indeed that one is the proper Object of our Senses, the other of our Faith. By the way I can discover no Opposition or Contrariety in the same Thing, being the Object of our Senses and our Faith, tho you seem to make one.

HERE again you make use of the Word *proper*, in a peculiar Sense of your own, and shou'd therefore have defin'd the Term, that you might have been understood. By the proper Object of our Senses, I understand the *Natural Object*; that is, an Object that affects our Senses with some certain Sensation; and of this kind I take all Bodies to be, and their Actions and Qualities. Farther to explain this, I esteem all Objects of our Senses that we Can or Do See, Hear, Feel, Smell or Taste, Now 'tis plain from what has been said that we See, Feel, Taste, and Smell the Bread and Wine, and that with the same Sensations after the Consecration as before, they must therefore be the natural or proper Objects of the Senses, in judging of which if the Senses can be deceiv'd after Consecration, we have no certain Proof that they can

be infallible before, since their Judgment is the same both before and after. But to deny this Infallibility of the Senses, is to deny that we have any certain Evidence of the Miracles of *Christ*, which destroys the *Christian Religion*.

NOR does this render the Blessed Sacrament less the Object of our Faith, since we believe that *Christ* has instituted this Sacrament as a Commemoration of his Death upon the Cross for the Sins of Mankind, and that he annexed very great Benefits to the worthy Receiving of it.

BUT you say, that you distinguish'd in your last for my better Satisfaction, and that I am silent to that Distinction, tho' it is of considerable Moment, and therefore you crave leave to offer it again, which you do in these Words.

YOU will allow, say you, a difference between a Messenger and the Message, therefore the means used to assure us of this, is (I suppose you mean) being a Messenger, are not for that Reason applicable to the Things contain'd in the Message, in order to such an Information as is necessary for me to have. So one Prince, that receives a Minister from another, must have recourse to his Senses for the Truth of the Credentials of the Messenger; but it does not therefore follow, that the Senses must bring him to the Knowledge of all that is contain'd in the Message; and if some Things be contain'd in the Message that are not Objects of the Senses and the Senses shou'd impose upon you in misrepresenting them, must it follow from thence, that you must doubt the Truth of the Credentials, because the same Sense are their proper Evidence?

SIR, if you had min'd my two former Letters as much as I have this of yours, you would not be surpriz'd that I took no Notice of the frivolous Distinction between the Message and the Messenger, because I had sufficiently answer'd that before in these Words.

GOD, therefore, appealing to the Certainty of the Senses judging of their Objects in their proper Position, could establish no Doctrine as the Superstructure, that is, what you call the Message, which must destroy the very Foundation of the whole: For that would be to oppose his own Design of establishing the *Christian Religion* itself; for if on one side he obliges us to yield our Assent to the Miracles, he has been pleas'd to perform under Pain of Reprobation, and on the other side obliges us to believe, that those very Evidences deceive us every day in an Object in its true Position, under Pain of Damnation, Man is sure to be damn'd on both sides; which is a flat Contradiction, and contrary to the Goodness, nay the Truth of God cannot therefore be true.

To this close, this important Argument, you make no Reply, unless we must take this trifling Distinction for one, which consists of bare Assertions without any Proof. In this your last Letter of the 5th of January, you add no Force to it, but the Illustration of one Prince's Minister to another, which can never bear the weight of an Argument, especially as here is one continued Absurdity.

What you call the Message, I call the Doctrines built as a Superstructure on his Mission; and if a Message contains any thing destructive of the Credentials of the Messenger, one or both must be false. You say a Prince that

that receives a Message from another must have Recourse to his Senses for the Truth of his Credentials of the Messenger; but say you it does not therefore follow that the Senses must bring to the Knowledge of all that is contain'd in the *Message*, &c, But with submission to your more Sagacious Penetration, Sir, I know of no other means a Prince has to arrive at the *Message* it self, but his Senses of Hearing and Seeing, and if a Messenger shall appeal to his Eyes or his Ears to prove his Credentials, I believe the Prince would think himself but scurvily us'd, if the Use of his Senses should be deny'd him in hearing or reading the *Message*; for that is the Case before us; the Eyes and Ears are equally necessary in both the *Credential* and the *Message*. If therefore your Illustration come not up to what you mean, it will much less come up to an Argument worth any Man's Notice.

But you go on to save this, and if *some things be contain'd in the Message, that are not the Object of the Senses, and the Senses should impose upon you in misrepresenting them; must it follow from thence, that you must doubt of the Credentials, because the same Senses are their proper Evidences.*

BUT, Sir, we have already prov'd that the *Bread and Wine* is as much the proper or natural Object of the Senses after Consecration as before, and that the Senses make the same Judgment of them, and so the Senses are impos'd on, and do not impose upon us; that is, the Senses that a Minute before are confess'd proper Evidences of the same Thing are immediately deceiv'd, and render'd incompetent Judges; and this is (if any thing be so) to make the Senses fallible and infallible. And I believe no Prince would have much regard to any Ambassador's *Credentials*, who should produce his King's Seal for the Validity of them, and then bring his King's Seal to contradict itself. Your concluding Stroke is extraordinary.

REASON, (you say) *cannot tell how Three makes One, and because my Reason is used in Proof of a Divine Mission, must it follow from thence, that the Truth of the Divine Mission ought to be question'd.*

THIS Argument really is no more than this, because Reason does not pretend to inform me of the Mode and Manner of God's Existence that is, does not meddle in an Object where it has by the Consent of all Men nothing to do; therefore it must be deceiv'd and mislead me where it as a proper Judge.

ALAS! Sir, whoever pretended that Reason was to tell us in what Manner, and how Three is One in the Trinity? And whoever pretended that Reason shou'd not conclude that *Christ* had a *Divine Mission*, when his Miracles had convinc'd the infallible Evidences, the Senses, that he cou'd come from none but God? Is there any parallel in the Case? Or is there the least Shadow of an Argument in this your last Paragraph. Where you make the Judgment of Things as proper Objects, the same as when they are not proper Objects; nay, that never by any side were acknowledg'd to be:

be so. But when we wander from Truth and are tenacious of Error, Absurdities must of necessity follow.

THUS, Sir, I have been at the Pains of going thorough your long Letter with so great a Particularity, that it has swell'd mine much beyond the Compass that the Validity of your Arguments requir'd. But to prevent any such Directions for the future, and to shew that the Dispute I propos'd in the beginning might have been compriz'd in a much less Extent than that to which it is arriv'd, and that it might be much shorter if candidly handled than any other can be. I shall lay down the state of the Question as I propos'd it, and the Progress we have made in it to this Time.

IN my first, after a short Introduction, I told you that all Dispute about the particular Divisions of the *Christian Religion* seem very superfluous, till the Foundation of the whole be certainly establish'd. So that it is to no purpose to dispute whether the *Greek Church* or *Latin*, the *Armenian* or the *Arrian*, the *Protestant* or the *Roman*, be the true Church out of which there is no Salvation, till we know whether *Christ Jesus*, who founded some Church, was sent from God or Not.

THIS therefore is the State of the Question, and that the most general that can be, containing under it all other Questions whatsoever, which are of no manner of Consequence till this is decided.

FURTHER to shew that I have from the beginning propos'd the right end of the Question, you must reflect that it is the most general of all others, as naturally claiming the first Place and containing under it all other Particulars; and the *Infallibility of the Church* can never be discuss'd till we know that there is any Church at all; for unless *Christ Jesus* be prov'd to be sent from God, he cou'd found no Church at all that cou'd lay any Obligation on Mankind.

To what purpose wou'd it be to tell a *Jew* or a *Deist* that our Church is infallible, when he shall reply, I know of no Church either fallible or infallible; you propose to prove *Christ* sent by God from the Miracles he perform'd, which all depends on the Infallibility of the Senses judging of their proper Objects in their true Position; and then you tell us those Eyes are deceiv'd, and take that for Bread and Wine which in reality are not so, and thus you make the Evidences you bring for the *Divine Mission* an Hundred thousand Times deceiv'd for once telling us Truth. Evidence like this no common Court of Judicature wou'd allow, and how then can a Man of Reason in so important a Point.

You wou'd tell him that the *Accidents* were the Objects of the Eyes, Ears, Smell, &c. and not the *Subjects*. He wou'd plainly tell you that unless you Spoke to be understood there was no Agreeing with you or Disagreeing, since what is not Intelligible is not the Object of the Understanding, and by consequence of Belief; that he knows no Existence of what you call *Accidents*.

cident without their Subject, and perhaps very merrily (for indeed this Argument deserves no better Reply than a Laughter) say, I hope you will grant that if I lay my Cane about you, that I beat nothing but the *Accidents*, but the *Subject* being another thing, I did not beat Mr. *Willis*. I am afraid it wou'd be a poor Plea in an Action of Battery to tell the Judges, that you did not beat *John-a Nooks* tho' you broke his Head, his Arm or the like, but that you only beat the *Accidents*. But indeed if we allow that the *Accidents* are not the Things as you assert, there wou'd scarce be a Crime that cou'd be prov'd on the most Guilty.

BUT you will say perhaps that the State of the Question is different between a *Christians*, nay and a Church of *England-Man*, and a *Jew* or *Deist*; since here the *Mission* is agreed on, but not with the *Jew* or *Deist*. But, Sir, if you deprive us of that Evidence by which we were only made *Christians*, in taking away the absolute Certainty of the Senses, you must of Course render us *Jews*, *Deists* or *Atheists*, by bringing in an *Universal-Scepticism*. So that still the state of the Case is the same between you and me, as between you and a *Deist* or *Jew*: For being a *Christian* from my Belief of the *Divine Mission* of Christ, which is only prov'd by the Senses assuring of me of the great and wonderful Miracles that God did in his Favour, when once you tell me that those Senses are not always certain Judges of their true and natural Objects, I can trust them in nothing, and so fall naturally into *Deism*, at least if not into *Atheism*. This is the blessed Effect of your Obsolete Adhesion to a Doctrine as unnecessary as absurd, nay impious; by imposing an Obligation on the People of committing the most direct and formal Idolatry, that ever People were guilty of, by adoring that little bit of *Waser* as the great and terrible as well as good God, who made the Heaven and Earth and all Things in them.

THIS is indeed a *Mystry* with a Vengeance; but it is one of the *Beast*, a *Mystery* of Iniquity, of Idolatry. Is there not *Mystery* enough in the blessed Sacrament, when we allow that Piece of Consecrated Bread conveys to the worthy Receiver of it such Benefits from God. If *Mystery* be a *hidden Thing*; I think the Manner and the Thing cou'd never discover any such Virtue in it; and only a lively Faith in *Christ Jesus*. and a thorough Belief of his Words cou'd effect it. More *Mystery* than this is only *Idolatry*, and let whatever Doctor, *Protestant*, or *Popish*, stretch his hyperbolical Veneration any thing beyond it, I know of no Duty incumbent on any Man to stand by it or vindicate it but himself. For the Fathers of the Church both Ancient and Modern were but Men, and Men visibly subject to Passions, and were therefore fallible, and we having the same Word of God, the same Benefit of Reason, and as proper Persons to consult that Word of God as they were, and to fix our own Faith on the Truth of the Gospel, and not their Interpretations of it. especially when they lead plainly to *Idolatry*, and the destruction of Christianity it self.

IN Order to the Proof of this first and most general Question, I ask'd whether *Christ Jesus* was sent from God or Not?

To this, you in substance, reply'd, That he was sent from God, and instance his Miracles, among other Things, as a Proof of this *Mission*: To this in substance I rejoyned that that was no Proof which can deceive us; the Proof of a Thing being a certain Evidence of its Truth, by which we cannot be deceiv'd, all others being but meer Probabilities. I therefore ask'd again whether you meant that the Miracles of *Christ* were an infallible Proof, that *Christ* had his *Mission* from God himself? To this you reply that the Miracles of *Christ* are the Voice of Heaven, and say that they amount to as certain a Proof as can be of a Thing. Upon this I again demanded how we are to know when a Miracle is perform'd? That is, how we know whether the Dead are rais'd, the Lame Walk and the Blind See, and the like, and in this Letter I own the Fact to be undeniable.

To this Question you reply thus, — As to the certainty of a Miracle I am to say, that if I saw a Child of mine Dead and laid in his Grave, and he were to be restor'd to me again, so me Days or Week after, I think I ought not to doubt of a Miracle being wrought in his Restoration.

THIS seeming not without some Reserve by the faintness of the Expression, I again demanded whether the *Jews* were infallibly certain that those Miracles of *Christ* were actually done, that is, that they cou'd not be deceiv'd in what they saw?

AT last you expressly allow that the *Jews* were infallibly assur'd of the reality of our *Saviour's* Miracles, that is, that their Eyes, &c. cou'd not be deceiv'd in their proper Objects, and those in their proper Position.

FROM hence I infer, thus God therefore appealing to the certainty of the Senses, judging of their Objects in their proper Position, cou'd establish no Doctrine, as the Superstructure which must destroy the Certainty of the very Foundation of the whole, &c. And that any Church that imposes an Article of Faith and Terms of *Salvation* which destroy this infallible Evidence of the *Christian Religion* itself cannot be a *Christian Church*; and then I ask whether the Church of *Rome* does not do this in imposing *Transubstantiation* which obliges us to believe that what ourselves assure us to be Bread and Wine is not so, but the real Body and Blood of *Christ*.

To this you make no other reply, but it is a Mystery (without telling what you mean by Mystery) and that it is the Object of Faith and not of the Senses; and that the *Accidents* (a word of no manner of meaning) are the Objects of the Senses and not the *Species*. And make a Distinction between the Proof of the *Mission* and the Message of the Person sent, which is after your way illustrated with an absurd Comparison of an Ambassador of one Prince to another, which will not hold with it self, and can therefore be no manner of Proof of any thing else.

I have

I have prov'd that the Bread and Wine after Consecration, raise the same Sensations they do before, and that if they are not the same, that then the Senses are not infallible judges of their Natural Objects; that is, of what they see, feel, taste, smell, but every Sense is deceived in its proper Operation: So that the certainty of *Christ's* Miracles, the proof of his Divine Mission is by this Doctrine perfectly destroyed. I shall only add here some Judgments of the Senses on the Objects of the Consecrated Wafer, which yet you will allow infallible, viz. When the Eye sees 50 or 100 Consecrated Wafers on the Patten or Dish, that the Priest deliver them from to the Communicants, it infallibly determines that each Wafer is not an hundred foot Diameter, nor of a Cubical, Spiral, Hexagonal, but of a circular Form; that it is White, not Black, nor Blue, Green, or the like. And the Taste infallibly determines, that it has relish of that sort of Bread, and not of Pork, Mutton, Oxymel of Squills, and the like. Now by this means the Senses are fallible and infallible in the very same Object, as these Decisions plainly evince, that those very Wafers by this Judgment (that you your self must allow to be certain) are the true and natural Objects of those Senses.

To make them therefore fallible, is to destroy the Truth of the *Christian Religion*, which to establish was the Question proposed for our Dispute, and which never can be establish'd as long as *Transubstantiation* is allow'd; which must be false, or the *Christian Religion* without any Foundation.

As for the Words of *Christ*, on the literal Sense of which you build all these Absurdities, they can be of no manner of weight to prove this Doctrine, unless you can demonstrate, that all the Texts of Scripture are to be understood literally, which no Man, nor even you your self, I dare believe, would pretend, since he calls himself a Door, a Vine, and the Way, which you will grant Metaphorical Expressions; but certainly there never can be a better Reason against a literal Sense of any Texts of Scripture, than when that Sense destroys the Foundation of the *Christian Religion* itself, and by consequence the Authority of those very Texts themselves.

I must therefore again conjure you by the God of Truth, to submit to so evident a Truth as supports the very Being of *Christianity* it self, and to think no more of Communion with that Church, which cannot maintain her usurp'd Infallibility, but by rendering precarious, nay absolutely uncertain, the very Foundation of *Christianity*, without which there can be no Church at all. I am,

S. I. R.,

Your Humble Servant.

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These

are all the Letters that pass'd between Mr. Willis and Mr. Battersby. The Priest discovers his uneasiness under the Pressure of such an Argument, which he can't be refuted with any manner of Reason.

However, when Mr. Battersby left the Town, he ordered the Person who carried his Letters, and bring those of Mr. Willis to him, to call frequently for his Reply; which he has done from the Time of the Delivery of the last Letter, the 7th; but meeting with nothing but frivolous put Offs, I thought I should for the Publick and the Good of my Country, and the Service of Religion, in preventing the seducing of other young People, by delaying the Edition in this Disputation; in all probability I might wait long enough before the Priest would find Leisure to expose the Weakness of his Cause any further.

To prevent any Objection from the Enemies of the Protestant Cause, that this was but an imaginary Dispute, and that the Persons introduced are only fictitious, the Priest's Original Letters are left in the Hands of Mr. Pemberton, Bookseller, at the Buck and Gun, against St. Dunstan's Church in Fleetstreet, for any one to see who has a mind to be satisfy'd in that Particular.

The shortness of the Method made use of by Mr. Battersby, makes it of more general use than those Voluminous Controversies which have loaded the Studies of Men curious in these Enquiries: For out of his last Letter, every one of the most Ignorant may furnish himself with a Confutation of Popery, which the whole College of Cardinals are not able to answer: And indeed that excellent Dr. Tillotson in his Discourse against Transubstantiation, has admirably declar'd that Doctrine to be the Millstone about the Neck of Popery, which must drown'd it at last.

F I N I S